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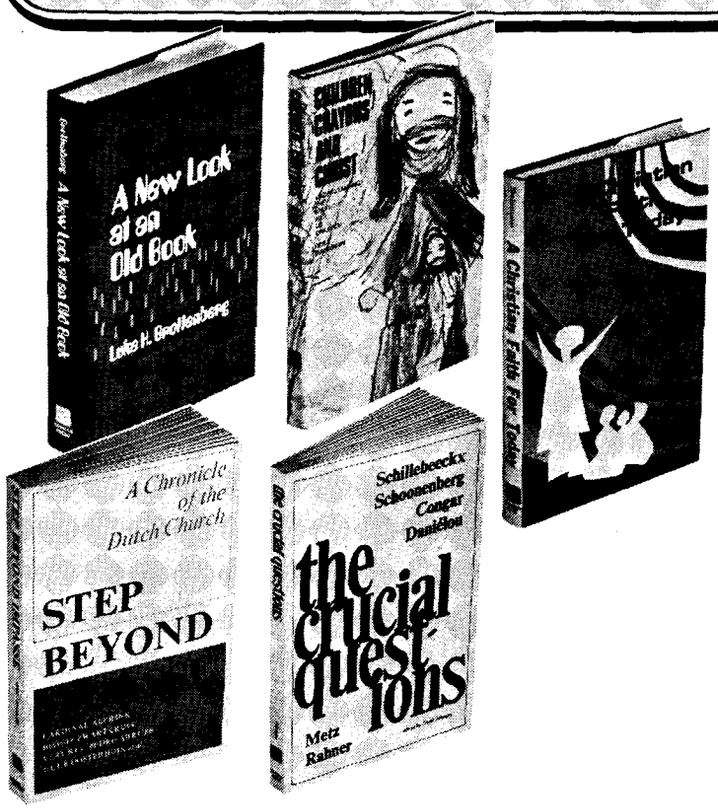

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"... we thought we wouldn't be labelled 'dirty Indians' anymore."

— *Deborah Rooks*

Deborah is a Sioux Indian high school girl who is tired of hearing Indians called "dirty," "lazy," "savage" — or any of the other epithets hurled at her people. And she's sick at heart from seeing other Indians her age who have been taught to be **ashamed they are Indians.** She knows all of this is cruelly wrong.

Because . . . Deborah knows the history and heritage of her people — a heritage rich in cultural values our confused society could do well to borrow. She understands the problems of her people and knows why she has a rightful pride in her Indian ancestry. She knows all this better than most Indians do, because this is part of her education at Red Cloud Indian School.

But, she wonders, do you know? Does anyone know, or even care? She revealed the depth of her feelings — and echoed those of her classmates — when she wrote about the late Senator Robert Kennedy's visit to our school:

> "I remember April 16, 1968 very clearly. It was a chilly, cloudy day, and all of us were waiting outside for Mr. Kennedy. When he came I felt sorry for him. He looked tired and sad, yet he kept smiling. He told us of our Indian heritage. He spoke of the good in the Indian people. It looked as though some of the kids were going to cry. He made us feel proud of our race, not ashamed. There were faraway looks in the eyes of the kids around me. Each face held a different look. Some were looking at him in awe, others with hope, others with faith. They felt that someone had finally realized we are here, someone who could help us was going to help us, and not push us away. He knew we cared, and we knew he cared, and we wouldn't be labelled 'dirty Indians' anymore."

Few people realize the terrible hurt our society has dealt to Indian youths. In movies, on TV — and even in some school books — they are vilified and humiliated. In some Indian schools they are taught to look down on their own people. They grow up ashamed, many believing that perhaps Indians are inferior. Yet the FACT is they are as

Robert Kennedy visiting with a Sioux Indian boy in his home on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

intelligent, as capable and as talented as any other children anywhere. And more perceptive than most. All they need **is a chance.**

That is why I beg for them. They desperately need our help, and I need your help to keep this school going. This is the nation's largest private school for Indian children. We take in more than 500 Sioux children each year, from pre-school through high school. Over half are boarders. They learn everything your kids learn — plus special studies to help them understand Indian problems and adjust to the world the white man has forced on them. With love, understanding and guidance we restore their human dignity and build their self-confidence. Anything you can send helps buy food, clothing, books, equipment. $5, $10, $20 — any amount you can spare helps these native American boys and girls get the same chance in life other American children get. Believe me, no one deserves it more.

— ***Father Ted Zuern, S. J.***

RED CLOUD INDIAN SCHOOL

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NEWS & VIEWS

A Word for Goodell

If there was any doubt about the Republican Party having the writing on the wall for Charles Goodell, it was dispelled when the Senator was publicly rebuked on successive days by Nelson Rockefeller and Richard Nixon.

As if to be sure there was no mistaking the fall from grace, Nixon took the added trouble to mispronounce Goodell's name in the course of a patronizing reference to Goodell's proposal for withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam by the end of 1970.

". . . This well-intentioned statement by Senator Goodwell, er, Senator Goodell," Nixon 'stumbled' at his Sept. 26 press conference. The man for the jugular has refined his techniques.

Poor Goodell. He was named by Rockefeller to serve out the unexpired term of Senator Robert Kennedy, and is up for reelection in 1970; at this writing, it is extremely doubtful that he will even get the nomination of his party.

The reason is simple: Goodell has not acted like a political surrogate should. He bucked Rockefeller and the Administration on the ABM, he has constantly needled Nixon's war-as-ever Vietnam policies, and he signed ads promoting the Oct. 15 Vietnam Moratorium movement.

In the high councils of the Republican Party, all that is fatal. So the word is out and all that apparently remains are the formal obsequies. Which is a great shame—for if anyone deserves to survive it is the politician who is a man of integrity, one honorable enough to be his own man even when (*particularly when*) he holds his seat by appointment.

Messrs. Rockefeller and Nixon might not understand this, but all who do, whatever their party, bow respectfully in the direction of Charles E. Goodell.

The Grass Curtain

Some minor Mexican officials might have a thing on hair [*Commonweal,* 10/10/69, p. 32], but for bureaucratic hang-ups there's nothing to match U.S. officialdom on marijuana.

The mayor of San Miguel de Allende orders males of long mane shorn at dawn; the U.S. government drops a blockade along an 1800-mile border to intercept a few pounds of marijuana. It's wacky.

Attorney General Mitchell reacts by conceding methods of the hunt may be extreme and that they will be reevaluated. Which, of course, will correct little.

The U.S. can revise the "methods"; it can soothe the annoyance of the Mexican government, make amends to the diplomat whose privileges it violated, placate the tourist industry, and extend profuse apologies to those it stripped naked in search of their joints.

It can do all this and more, but it will not alter the basic problem; the U.S. is paranoid on grass and signs increase that this is growing into the sort of psychological disturbance which resulted in prohibition.

Propagandizing the C-5A

You'd never guess the plane advertised was the same $5.2 billion monstrosity whose exotic military purposes and wild overrun costs exacerbated lawmakers and helped trigger Congressional review of the Pentagon.

Lockheed's two-page ads in national magazines [*Newsweek,* 7/29/69] propagandize the Strangeloveian C-5A as an innocent relief gig.

"People Starving. Send Help," the ad is headed. The copy opens: "An earthquake leaves a city in ruins. A flood isolates thousands. Crop failure threatens an entire country . . . One U.S. Air Force C-5A, operating from a base thousands of miles distant, could feed 100,000 people indefinitely . . ."

Come off it. The C-5A is designed to lug troops, tanks, helicopters, etc., on a moment's notice anywhere in the world in the cause of Pax Americana.

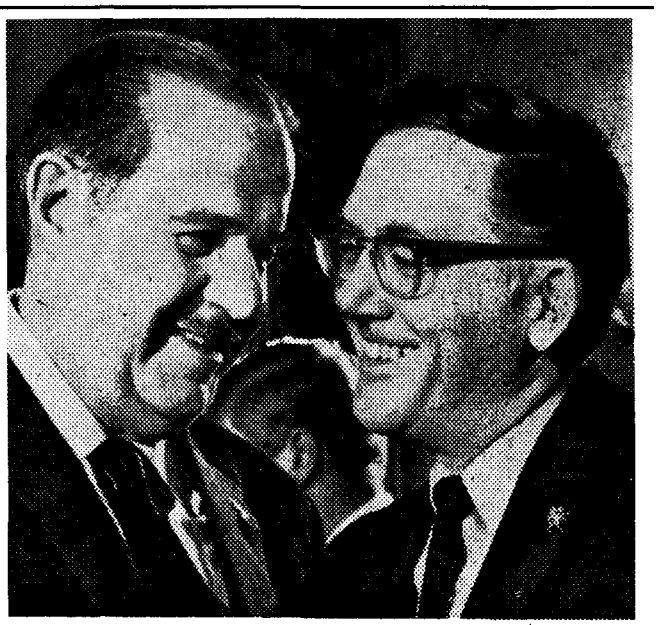
Or, as Senator Fulbright put it, the C-5A "permit[s] the Pentagon to intervene in every trouble spot in the world, whether or not this was in the nation's interest."

Maybe this is running ahead of likelihoods; maybe not. But there's no maybe about the C-5A's being an extravagance of indecent proportions. No slick Madison Avenue ads can camouflage that fact. Why, the C-5A isn't even a strongly defendable military investment. One source describes the plane as a "flying graveyard." But we're going to buy them by the score.

Therein lies the story. Health and welfare programs go begging, but there's always billions for the military.

A few months ago it looked as though Congress was at last going to gain some control over military spending. But nine weeks of debate has produced only $71 million in cuts of the military authorization bill, less than one percent of the sum proposed for the military. And that modest trim is at the expense not of the war machine but of "social science" research programs sponsored by the Pentagon.

It Happens in the Best of Families



Associated Press

JOY IN THE FAMILY: Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania and his wife embrace after his election as Senate minority leader. ***(New York Times, 9/26/69)***

Odds 'n Ends

—Maybe the Army did drop its murder case against six Green Berets reluctantly, as alleged. But it is hard to believe the Army's heart was in the prosecution in the first place. For while the accused lined up top legal talent for their defense (F. Lee Bailey, Edward Bennett Williams *et al.*), the Army designated as prosecutors two lawyers who had not a minute of civilian courtroom experience.

—Quote of the Week? There's no topping Mario Procaccino's promise for when he is elected mayor of New York: "We will once again have an administration that is inept in putting up with problems." JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Ripe Moments

Broussard, La.

To the Editors: Regarding Fr. Jordan Bishop's article *Papal Infallibility And All That,* in which he stated ". . . . it is doubtful whether new forms will be evolved simply by deliberation and planning, be it of councils or synods or the Roman See. The Spirit works as well through events, painful as the process may be at times." How true! Do not ideas and events evolve at their own ripe moment? Is not the behavioral scientists' moment of truth upon us? The "breakdown of present paradigms" indeed makes it urgent "that theologians discuss possible alternatives . . ." with the complementary expertise of the behavioral scientists. Does not the "authority crisis" by its very nature imply such a need . . . for those psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, et al. whose tested or testable hypotheses are begging to be needed? The "that" knowledge of the theologians with the "how" knowledge of the social scientists could do much to enhance the reforms and new forms of human endeavor pursuing ultimate realities, . . . for "there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of ministries, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of workings, but the same God, who works all things in all" (Cor. 12:4-6). MARIE SCHICKEL

Misanthropic Snort

New York

To the Editors: John L. McKenzie makes some admirably forthright comments on current cliches about black violence [Aug. 22]. But the upshot of his remarks seems to be a misanthropic snort: Crime is crime; everyone is bound to make a mess of things: let's not sully the purity of our own pacifism by taking sides or nurturing hopes. However unpleasant it is to have to make distinctions in the mudpile of history, I think one can and should recog-

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CATCH 23

There's a new catch in Vietnam. Everyone knows, of course, that all extra-legal murders by U.S. military men are prosecuted as long as the situation is not too embarrassing. For example, ten Marines were convicted of a terrorist rape and murder of five villagers from Xuan Ngoc in 1966 [see "An American Atrocity" in the August *Esquire*]. Marines will be Marines. But any trial entangling the Green Berets, high-ranking henchmen and the CIA is too embarrassing. That's the catch. So no day in court for the China Sea Seven. Just a whole lot of evasion going on. Colonel Robert Rheault denies he knew the man. Captain Budge Williams, another of the formerly accused, covered all the bases when he said in his own defense: "I regard all enemies as dangerous. When you find one, you kill him. That's what they pay me for. Not to worry about his social problems." That's what we like to hear.

The largest absurdity in this case is not the Army's mismanagement—from the secret incarceration to Secretary Resor's hollow excuse for dropping charges—nor the CIA's reluctance to come forth, but rather the sudden flurry over this one murder. Thai Khac Chuyen may, indeed, have passed away at the hands of the Green Berets, yet he was hardly the first to have been "terminated with extreme prejudice."

Such atrocities, commonplace tactics in the American war effort, have so far been discreetly camouflaged by good press, ballad and John Wayne. Why was this business-as-usual homicide singled out? According to the latest intrigue, General Abrams was simply revenging a Colonel Rheault lie. If the Green Beret commander had only told the truth about the unfortunate foul-up, apparently there would have been no noise. Army justice is this sort of gentleman's agreement.

Lest national security be endangered, that is in order to avoid bad-mouthing the war and its makers, President Nixon, when it really counted, buckled and ran away. A bug-out, Senator Scott might say.

A trial of the Green Berets would be too good to be true. Suddenly the whole foundation of the Vietnam war would be shaken. If the killing of one man could not be defended, how then the killing of hundreds of thousands?

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OUT TO LUNCH

New York's Cardinal Cooke is a man for some of the seasons, but not all of the seasons. He is regularly photographed with President Nixon, General Westmoreland, in a fighter-bomber, blessing the troops, at a Metropolitan Museum reception, and, but less frequently, among the little people.

James Forman tried unsuccessfully to see the Cardinal a while back about his Black Manifesto. No excuse was offered, but it appears Cooke does not wish to become associated with extremists. His response to Forman's bad manners was a frosty unsigned news release full of self-congratulation for charity previously extended and disdain for, God-forbid, un-American ideology.

Although Forman has given up seeking an appointment with the Cardinal, an ad hoc group of sympathetic Catholics, led by Catholic priest Paul Mayer, has been trying to gain a hearing with Cooke since August. The first time there was a conversation with the vicar general; the second time, with some monsignori. Still no Cooke. May we remind the Cardinal of the sentiments expressed in his installation address: "We must not hesitate to be flexible, to think out and try out new ideas, to promote necessary changes, to consult democratically, to tap the resources of all within the Church."

WRITING OFF THE BLACKS

Of all the negativisms of the Nixon Administration, none is more cruel because none is more directly at the expense of the nation's aggrieved minority—and the most innocent element thereof: its children—than the retreat from school desegregation in the South. The action is a perversion of the law to which Mr. Nixon professes to be unqualifiedly dedicated; more than that, it is the betrayal of the black people. Not that blacks should have expected much from Nixon in the first place; it always took a special kind of trust for blacks to invest much hope in Nixonian protestations about racial justice. But the minimum expectation was that Nixon would observe the letter of the law; as the school question demonstrates, even that was expecting too much.

So it turns out that Senator Strom Thurmond was not so witless as he seemed last April when he was passing the word to South Carolina officials to defer compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act because a more lenient attitude would likely evolve under the new Administration. Thurmond knew whereof he spoke, though it is doubtful that even he hoped for so much as was realized. The Nixon Administration has not only granted desegregation delays to 30 Mississippi school districts, with other delays probable, but it has also served notice on the Supreme Court that it is not disposed to enforce rulings which the Court might make to speed up the ridiculously slow process of school desegregation. It is a unique moment in the history of the land when the executive branch tells the judiciary, in effect, to pound sand.

The implications of all this in terms of the domestic tranquility of the country are tremendous, for the sell out on schools is the confirming signal that the priorities of the Nixon Administration do not include blacks. The message got partly through when Nixon emasculated the Job Corps, mortgaged the OEO to a Chamber of Commerce philosophy, trimmed the Model Cities program, and decreed the "new federalism," which, as black elected officials point out, opens the door to a return of tyranny against poor minorities. If glib rhetoric masked the implications of each of these steps, there is no camouflaging things now. The Nixon Administration has written off the Negro.

The whole business fits too neatly into the "Southern strategy" for broadening the Republican base to suggest that the Nixon Administration is uncalculating about what it is doing. Obviously the Administration is not interested and does not particularly want the black vote. And maybe it can get by without it—but not without buying big trouble. One of the fundamental complaints of black militants is that American legislation does not work for blacks, and with each new day Nixon adds evidence to support the charge. The man is a fool who thinks the day is not coming when militants and non-militants alike will close their fists and cry, "Enough!"

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Is Economic Crisis Around the Corner?

Great changes of phase in world financial history do not follow from a single crisis. Crises, rather, are outcroppings of historic changes of phase. What is popularly viewed as "the crisis" (such as the market break of 1929, and the coming break of 1969) finds its metaphor in a great S-shaped wave: slowly gathering momentum over an eight-year period, it rises through a cluster of seismographic events (its "point of inflection") and then spreads over a two-year period from the financial to the "real" sectors of the economy, leaving a broad wake of structural change in the economy, in the political relationship between government and citizenry, and in economic doctrine.

We are now in the upswing of a change of phase as serious as that of 1921-31. Its broad upsweep has been characterized by pressures on many nations' productive capacity (especially in the form of a growing world shortage of skilled labor), followed by rising interest rates, declining liquidity (stemming largely from the falling valuations of existing debt), and the emergence of financial constraints even more stringent than those in

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the labor and capital markets. It is this latter set of constraints which now signals that unless inflationary pressures accelerate, a financial crisis is imminent.

Much as the crisis of 1921-1931 found its roots in the agricultural depression of 1921, the restrictive immigration laws of 1924, and the turndown of housing construction in 1926, so today in 1969 we find the culmination of policies initiated in 1961 when the Kennedy Administration took power. We have seen the escalation of war in Southeast Asia in May 1965 divert manpower from the private to the government sector, and the credit crunch of 1966 drain funds from the mortgage markets, at least so far as residential construction has been concerned.

The Vietnam War, as Prof. Terence McCarthy has emphasized, was perhaps the first war in history wilfully entered into at a time of already fully-employed resources. Prof. McCarthy has drawn an analogy with an agricultural country going to war at the outset of its grain-harvesting season. The Vietnam war came at a time when labor and raw material shortages were already making themselves felt. The result was a massive transfer of the nation's economic resources to the government sector. Young manpower moved into the armed services, copper was requisitioned for armaments (driving its price in London to nearly $1.00 per pound), and financial resources were increasingly absorbed by the shortening government debt. As a result of the "credit crunch" that emerged in early 1966, housing construction was cut back (and remains so), while banks which did not act at that time to move into a more liquid position in their government and municipal bonds portfolio (at the cost of showing initially heavy operating losses, to be sure), now find themselves in an embarassingly illiquid state.

The United States has in short moved into a position akin to that which Europe's Common Market countries have found themselves in for some years, namely, one of labor, capital and raw material scarcity, resulting in sharply rising wage rates, interest rates and domestic prices. Nonetheless, government economists predict that interest rates and inflationary pressures will slacken as the economy "cools down." What is not explicated is the fact that today's money market pressures stem *not* from a growing demand for funds to finance current operations, but to refinance *past* national debt now falling due. The process feeds upon itself. Because of the rising interest rates in recent years, the government has borrowed for shorter and shorter debt-maturities, so that whereas some years ago about one-fifth of the national debt was financed each year, today that proportion has jumped to about one-third. Government bill rates of 8 percent are the highest since the Civil War, and will go higher. As a result, the decline in the stock market may be expected to persist for at least another 200 points. This will of course increase corporate demand for bank credit in preference to drawing upon the stock and bond markets.

Aggravating the current crisis is the popular view that we are not in a change of phase of economic history at all, and that financial crises are in fact a thing of the distant past. Indeed, the Friedmanesque doctrine now adopted by most of the nation's banks (and many of its large corporations) states essentially that no structural crisis *can* occur: because "money makes all the difference"—all that is necessary is to change the money supply to bring about any desired change in the level of economic activity.

The break in the chain of payments which characterizes "the" crisis always comes later than might be expected: its magnitude is only increased, however, as institutional constraints are stretched to accommodate growing disequilibrium. This postpones the crisis, but at the cost of aggravating its ultimate severity: at some point, those nations in which credit and labor constraints are tightest experience a series of shocks which are rapidly transmitted to other countries.

Unless inflationary forces provide the safety valve, the following outlook is likely. Whether it materializes in October-November or can be temporarily postponed by the "suspended animation" of institutional bail-outs, there is overwhelming pressure for the cluster of crises to occur soon, and in the following order:

In the realm of international finance, Britain's pound remains overvalued by at least 15 percent, and may be devalued again by November. The franc is also still overvalued: France's anticipated labor strikes may be expected to lead to renewed capital outflows and devaluation by perhaps 10 percent. Should the franc be devalued again, however, the Italian lira would come under pressure, necessitating a parallel devaluation. These three countries are the major devaluation risks of Europe. Only large-scale international lending can enable them to support their currencies at present levels.

On the domestic front, interest rates will probably not slacken through the balance of the year. Increased rates may be expected for state and municipal bonds and for both long- and short-term government securities, as the government moves to lengthen its debt at the cost of substantially higher interest burdens. The liquidity pressures engendered by these high interest rates will continue to depress the stock market, coming as they will on top of declining corporate earnings and a large-scale dividend cutback by many firms. Receivables will mount up in the corporate sector as companies attempt to finance their business with "bills payable."

An early casualty of the liquidity squeeze will be the savings and loan associations, especially those of California. It is well within the realm of probability that a California S&L whose shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange will be permitted to "go under" as a warning to others in the state, which have already

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increased their borrowings from the Federal Home Bank Board (FHLB) to levels far beyond prudent business practice. The failure of a single S&L, however, may be expected to cause a drain of corporate savings funds from other S&L's. (Only massive new loans from the FHLB can compensate for this savings outflow). The result will in any case be a large-scale dumping of long-term mortgages to raise cash, which will exert even sharper pressures on mortgage rates and aggravate the country's housing shortage. Residential construction will continue to stagnate, not only in 1970 but for many years to come. What construction as does take place will be increasingly commercial rather than residential in nature, aggravating the urban exodus of employed persons and further reducing the urban tax base. Financial power will be transferred from the states and municipalities to the federal government, futher centralizing economic decision-making.

Also suffering from high interest rates will be bond dealers and commercial banks, which will see the value of their bond inventories sharply reduced. Banks will see a continuation of the decline in certificates of deposit, which have already fallen some $5 billion so far this year. Regulation Q, which governs the interest rates which banks may pay on time and savings deposits, will finally be raised in order to enable them to retain funds in the face of sustained high interest rates. New York City banks are already paying an effective 15¼ percent for funds in the Eurodollar markets, and for funds deposited by foreign central banks (which are exempt from the Regulation Q interest ceilings). The raising of Regulation Q will therefore cut even more deeply into bank earnings. It is the largest New York City banks that will therefore find themselves in the most awkward position, having reacted most belatedly to the new economic environment. A further decline in large-city banking stocks is therefore in order.

It is in the wake of the crisis—which lasted two years during 1929-31—that the after-effects will express themselves in a revolution in economic doctrine and in a new set of political-economic platforms. Just as Keynesianism emerged from the depression as a special theory pertaining to underemployed economies, in the 1970's economic doctrine will see the emergence of an economics of full employment (at least of *skilled* labor). Academic economic theory concerning "real" flows will become reconciled with financial and "business" economics, with greater emphasis placed on the role of financial constraints. The result will be a doctrine emphasizing the capital function's role, both in the "real" sense of accumulating society's productive powers, and in the financial sense of entering the financial markets through depreciation flows, debt-refinancing needs, and changes in corporate liquidity. In short, liquidity and capital theory will become integrated into economic doctrine. Furthermore, today's unfortunate aggregate approach to macroeconomics will be supplanted by disaggregated models.

The platform of this new New Economics will be radical, in that it will be anti-federalist and anti-nationalist, and will point to the need for restructuring the economy toward regional and local decentralization and autonomy, riding on what will surely be an anti-military wave.

ERASMUS PESHINE SMITH

(Erasmus Peshine Smith is the pseudonym of a consultant in international economic affairs.)

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BLITZ ON DIVINITY AVE.

KICKOFF AT HARVARD

People who hoped for a brief cooling off period at Harvard this fall, after the turbulent events of spring, saw their hopes shattered last week. Classes started on Monday, and on Thursday a group of young people, some apparently students and some not, raided the Center for International Affairs. Is was a swift and decisive action that resembled the tactics recently employed by urban guerrillas in Brazil. About 20 young men and women entered the Center building, located ironically enough, on Divinity Avenue. According to press reports they announced that the building was being "liberated" and ordered everybody out. Some staff left immediately. Others refused, or tried to argue with the guerrillas and were ejected forcibly. The *Boston Globe* carried a large first-page photo of Professor Benjamin H. Brown with a white bandage covering his ear. The report stated that he had been punched when he tried to evade the interlopers and that the wound on his ear had required several stitches to close. The young people wrote antiwar anti-imperialist slogans on the walls and then scattered. As they left the building they shouted, "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh. The NLF is bound to win."

Immediately the new dean of Harvard College, Ernest R. May, announced that he was shocked by the incident and appointed a committee to look into it. Elizabeth Harvey, a Radcliffe junior and co-chairman of SDS, firmly denied that SDS had anything to do with the raid. However, since Harvard SDS is now rent by the same kind of factionalism that has plagued it on the national level, it is not impossible that the invasion was carried off by a faction of SDS. Aficionados of student left politics knew that it was *not* PL'ers who pulled it off

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since they would not have been shouting support for the NLF which they are now criticizing as a sell-out for its willingness to negotiate with the USA.

The very next day after the raid on the Center for International Affairs, a much larger nonviolent group of students entered University Hall, headquarters for the Arts and Sciences faculty, and demanded that Harvard get completely out of a new multimillion dollar research program called "Project Cambridge," which protesters described as an effort to computerize counter-insurgency. While all these things were going on, readers were perusing the pessimistic fall issue of *Harvard,* entitled "Universities in Trouble." In one of the articles Professor H. Stuart Hughes wrote about the urgent need to "depoliticize Harvard" and other faculty members complained that it was getting harder and harder to teach nowadays.

It certainly is. The raid on the Center for International Affairs dramatizes yet another time the stiff price we are paying for our accumulated inattention to the transformation of the university into a kind of research and development arm for the Departments of State and Defense. There are very serious questions in my mind whether the kind of work the Center does belongs on a university campus. But since these questions were not raised through normal channels with sufficient forcefulness and intellectual clarity, they have now been raised by urban guerrillas and complicated by the spectre of violence on campus. The fact is that even people who have been at Harvard a long time probably did not know where the Center was and what it was doing. Now we all know. But now, instead of being able to raise the question whether Harvard should support such a program, we must discuss instead whether students should push professors down stairs. And, as a professor, my opinion on that subject is very unequivocal.

The Harvard Center for International Affairs is now 11-years-old. Before its establishment some Harvards had taken part in neighboring MIT's Center which was started in 1950 with funds from the Central Intelligence Agency. The first director of the MIT Center, Max Millikan, came from his job as assistant director of the CIA. The Harvard Center was organized by McGeorge Bundy. According to the Harvard catalog, the Center is especially concerned with "the process of development and modernization in the less developed countries." It also specializes in what the catalog calls "the management of force in the modern world, which involves not only military technology, and strategic analysis and arms control but also a deeper understanding of conflict behavior." The "conflict behavior" part of the Center's program must seem especially vivid this week. Although the catalog says nothing about the sources of the Center's funds, the publicity attendant on last week's raid included the information that it is funded mainly by the Ford Foundation and does research for the Department of Defense. One of the Center's most important programs is bringing to Cambridge each year about 15 "Fellows" from countries within the American power orbit. These Fellows are drawn, according to the catalog, from the "ministries, economic agencies, and diplomatic and military services of 25 countries." The Visiting Committee for the Center includes Douglas Dillon, Winthrop Aldrich and John J. McCloy. No isolated ivory tower, it encourages its faculty members and associates to "gain in experience by serving as consultants to various agencies." They do, according to David Horowitz' recent *Ramparts* exposé, for the State Department, the CIA, the Army, Navy, Airforce and RAND.

The program of the Harvard Center raises in one knotty package many issues now torturing the conscience of American higher education. Granted that government service is a worthwhile career and that those entering it should be as well prepared as possible; is independent, critical scholarly thinking really possible in centers with such undisguised ties to existing centers of American world power? Should a university which is supposed to pursue *Veritas* and supply a community that transcends mere national interests allow itself to become a subcontractor to the American military? What happens to the whole scholarly enterprise if overseas colleagues in this or that field begin to suspect every American guest researcher as an agent or semi-agent of American intelligence agencies? Witness the disastrous consequences of the ill-fated Project Camelot and Michigan State's Vietnam excursion. Admittedly, rivers of funds have flowed into universities via government and foundation-supported "centers" of one variety or another. But money alone doesn't make scholarship possible. Certain kinds of money may even make it impossible.

Young scholars are increasingly doubtful about whether they can do the kind of critical work they want to, and our nation sorely needs, if it is to avoid future Vietnam-type disasters, in such centers. As a result, independent centers have begun to emerge where scholars work without the Greeks-bearing-gifts constrictions of the established centers. But the same thing could be asked about sector after sector in today's university. Why raise hell about ROTC when America's imperial policies and the men who carry them out are both being prepared down the street at this or that "center"? If the university is really to be "depoliticized," the process is going to cut much deeper and leave a lot more holes than some people imagine. It means not only keeping students from drowning out their professors' lectures with chants, it also means reestablishing the university's critical role *vis à vis* our society; and this will cost, literally, million of dollars if it entails losing the support of those who want advice but not criticism in the how and why of America's role in a poor and angry world. HARVEY COX

(Harvey Cox, whose most recent book is The Feast of Fools, *is a regular columnist in these pages.)*

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THE LIFE AND Times OF GAY TALESE

The citadel of the Old Journalism

JOHN LEO

The New Journalism has been around long enough for its chief practitioners to acquire specialties and standard epithets, suitably Homeric. Tom Wolfe ("two years ahead of any sociologist") instructs us in morals, manners and the new *angst*. Rex Reed ("antennae no one else has even heard of") corners the market on bitchy show-biz put-downs. Jimmy Breslin ("a daily short story, written on deadline") adopts a boozy illiterate pose to tackle sports, cataclysms, barroom Jacobins and the mob. Norman Mailer ("history as the novel"), foremost among the novelists who have turned to the New Journalism to revive fading reputations, is the movement's new Pelagius, wrestling with Satan, politics, some sports and the apparently unfathomable Mailer psyche.

As any reader can tell you, the Old Journalism distinguishes sharply, or thinks it does, between objective reportage and opinion pieces. The New Journalism, by now the reigning style at *New York* magazine, *Esquire* and the *Village Voice,* is simple reportage struggling to be fiction. The author orchestrates details and scenes like a novelist, heaping up great piles of carefully selected trivia, brandnames and long quotes, driving toward some cosmic sociological point. Scenes and feeling are important, not facts themselves or analysis. The truth is in the material, forever beyond the grasp of "straight" journalism, and must only be teased out by spare, subjective, novelistic techniques.

Thus Breslin can see the Mafia revealed in a diamond glittering on the pinky of Tony Provenzano, Mailer the Republican sickness in the gaudy plasticity of Miami, and Wolfe a new social style for the rising bourgeoisie in the reclusive Hugh Hefner, fiddling with the dials in an electronic bedroom and trying to remember the last time he stepped outdoors.

Wolfe is the most successful practitioner of the new art, and probably the only one with real genius for it. Most would also call him the founder of the movement, too, but he defers in favor of Gay Talese. In a recent rhapsodic article, he said his eyes were opened to the possibilities of the New Journalism by Talese's 1962 *Esquire* piece on Joe Louis. The article, Wolfe wrote, "really knocked the wind out of me. . . . I knew I couldn't have done it with what I then knew about journalism . . . and that was a rough dawn." The things that bowled Wolfe over when he read this piece—the short story format and a succession of intimate scenes, the kind not normally conducted in front of journalists—are now the staples of the New Journalism.

So after seven years of success, what could be a better test for the New Journalism than a decision by the Founder to take on the citadel of the old, the *New York Times?* Talese has done so in his best-seller, *The Kingdom and the Power* (World, $10), and it must be said that the results are mixed. Like the *Times* itself, the book is a great unedited hulk in which the nuggets of real interest are duly buried as a challenge to the dedicated reader.

Talese, it should be noted, spent 10 years as a *Times*man and the last seven New Journalizing for the magazines. The resultant mixture in style has affected the structure of the book, and absolutely befuddled reviewers, most of whom have been reduced to muttering their own beefs about the *Times,* or exasperated declarations that this-is-not-how-the-book-should-have-been-written. The *Times*man in Talese lives on in the compulsion

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toward pointless completeness—spear-carriers in the *Times* pageant are exhaustively chronicled down to their first summer job. A minor event in *Times* history, the Manchester affair, gets 10,000-word treatment for some reason, possibly because the author had done an *Esquire* article on the subject and couldn't resist throwing it into the book *in toto*.

The New Journalist in Talese is forever trying to capture the real *Times* by a telling scene or explaining what everyone felt at a critical moment. But the effort doesn't come to much. The first few chapters are built around a 4 o'clock news conference one day at the *Times,* but as everyone knows, nothing happens at that conference, and as an effort to structure scenes at the *Times* it proves pointless—Talese drops it and wanders off into straight history and anecdote. The only reason this is worth mentioning is that it seems to describe the limits of the New Journalism. It is often spectacularly effective in delineating a person, a small group of people or a social event. But for an *institution,* and a ponderous non-dramatic one at that, well, maybe only the boring Old Journalism will do.

As a "color" writer concerned with power relationships, Talese ignores the kind of analysis most readers expect. Lester Markel, the Sunday editor for the past 500 years or so, is described in his personality (awful) and his influence in the hierarchy (immense) with no reference to how he ran the Sunday paper (ruinously). Nor in discussing the foreign desk, is there any explanation of why reporting from abroad so often seems curiously askew or downright wrong, as George Lichtheim, among others, wondered at great length in *Commentary* not long ago. Or, for that matter, why major bureaus such as Paris and Rome have been run by distinguished correspondents who never bothered to learn the local language. By and large, Talese is not interested in discussing the quality of the reporting, only the breathless anticipation of future internal intrigues, which, after all, can be studied just as well at General Motors or Lever Brothers.

Water-Cooler Gossip

The book is packed with office gossip of the kind normally heard around the water cooler and forgotten the next day: a *Times* discussion of whether "Stas" Radziwill prefers the spelling "Stash" to "Stas"; the revelation that one editor was attracted to his future wife by the beauty of her breasts; a one-line teaser that a former *Times* clerk was in the employ of the CIA. Whenever the New Journalist in Talese tries to recondition an anecdote or set of anecdotes for proper mood, the results are shaky. One segment of the book, which appeared a few years ago in *Esquire,* depicted the *Times* city room as an ominous place, full of random malevolence: a young reporter curtly fired for placing a gag line at the end of a City College awards list, a tale of a reporter who mysteriously disappeared after presuming to take a new desk near the front of the room, another story about a reporter who was summoned out of bed and down to the *Times* in the driving rain because he had overlooked the ritual "good night" to his superior editor. Good stuff, if you're writing about the awful majesty of the *Times*. But then the last of these three incidents was part of a long-running personal feud and had nothing to do with anyone's awful majesty. And the reporter who mysteriously disappeared actually shifted, voluntarily, to another department and quit many months later for reasons unrelated to his seizure of a desk too near the throne.

Charges of inaccuracy and plain fakery have dogged all the New Journalists. Dwight Macdonald, who contemptuously calls it "parajournalism," labored to list scores of alleged distortions in Tom Wolfe's piece on the *New Yorker*. Some of this kind of reputation has clung to Talese too, probably unfairly. To one who has worked for two years in the *Times* cityroom, his book is astonishingly accurate. That is, the facts are right, but consume the "mood" segments at your own risk.

If the book is interesting, colorful and generally accurate, why is it so unsatisfying? The answer, I think, is that it is an "insider" book by a writer who has been a *Times*man too long. It is not that Talese is uncritical. He writes—briefly, it is true—about the paper's awe of officialdom, its relentless "boosterism" (i.e., prejudice in favor of powers that be), its love of the past and reluctance to go out on any unoccupied limb. But he believes the *Times* myth about itself.

Times reporters, who grow accustomed to seeing the doors of the mighty swing open at the mention of their employer's name, can easily become so entranced by the *Times* that they write books entitled *The Kingdom and the Power* without a trace of saving irony. Under Talese's supervision, the editors are not merely middle- and high-level executives of the sort found at every corporation the *Times'* size. They grow, anecdote by anecdote, into near mythological figures of radiant power. One British writer, who knew most of Talese's central characters from their days in London, said after reading the book, "You simply cannot make Balzacian drama out of light opera." The book is more or less structured around the struggle over which *Times* faction will control the Washington Bureau. But since $10 best-sellers devoted to a corporate struggle over who will get the failing branch office in the South do not have automatic appeal, a good deal of labored lionizing is necessary to set the stage. This is not to put down the *Times* editors. They are as good and bad, talented and untalented as anyone else. But they are olympian only to Talese.

Instead of a Stendhalesque version of "Executive Suite," many of us consumers of the Old Journalism would have preferred a man of Talese's talents to ask

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different questions. How does the internal intrigue, which we must assume is standard in all large corporations, affect the product? What is the point of writing about power at the *Times,* when the people who have it find they can't use it, as Clifton Daniel did when he tried to name a new Washington Bureau Chief? How much of what the *Times* does so poorly can be traced to the complacent view of itself as the world's greatest newspaper?

One of the *Times'* problems is fairly obvious—that its love of the past and sense of its own *gravitas* makes it all too cautious in a period when new departures and a lot more journalistic digging are necessary. Talese gets into some of this. From the time a story idea is dreamed up, the idea and then the copy go through many, many hands. As like as not, this is a conservatizing process. Whether it's because the copy editors, sub-editors and then top editors are reluctant to be criticized from the rung above for allowing a strong story, or because of the *Times'* wary insistence that "every word be true," many an article emerges from the grinder as pure pap. Risky stories—of police abuses, let us say, or charges by the outs against the ins—are almost routinely toned down. Often the motives are good. It may come of a sense that the *Times'* power is so great that it must be super-careful not to let unfair charges in its columns. But at any rate, it is hard to find out exactly who is toning down the copy and why. One component in this mysterious process may be suggested: by and large the *Times* is run by men whose families were not socially secure a generation ago. They are men, largely white Southern or urban Jew, who climbed up the hard way, and having done so, have not unreasonably adopted a beneficent view of the system as it is. The boosterism, patriotism and distrust of boat-rockers in general may be based, at least in part, on the conviction that a world that could allow their own rise is basically in good shape.

Whatever the components, this basically optimistic view of reality beams forth from the *Times* every day. Whatever the daily jolts and disasters, the news will be prepared and served in such a way that the commuter can consume both it and his morning coffee without gagging on either. It is true that the *Times* is changing. The Chicago police riot, which the paper played straight, was the first time, to my knowledge, that readers have been let in on the news that not all policemen are the apple-chewing, dog-patting patrolmen of urban myth. But then the nation already knew that from the convention TV coverage. The real breakthrough will come when the *Times* can bring itself to lift up a few rocks for a disinterested sighting of what lies on the underside.

Above all, the tone of a civilized man

LET US NOW PRAISE DWIGHT MACDONALD

JOHN SIMON

True film critics in America can be numbered on the fingers of one hand. That is why Dwight Macdonald's decision, at the end of 1966, to stop writing film criticism was as great a loss as that of a finger—to a one-handed man.

Macdonald's chief virtues as a film critic were, are (I cannot speak of him in the past) three. First, the breadth of his vision: his film writings are in glorious CriticScope. Unlike the critic of fine arts, dance or music who can, because of the relative abstraction of his subject, function in solipsistic absorption with the technique of his art (though he too would benefit from widening his horizon), the film critic must be immersed in every known discipline as well as in that great indiscipline which is life. For film is an eclectic, ecumenical art, made up of just about everything and eager to make just about everything of itself. To know the other arts, sciences, social sciences, technology, languages, etc. is all grist for the film critic's mill—as it was, consciously or unconsciously, for the film-maker's. Macdonald is an educated man, interested in almost all things and knowledgeable about many; especially handy is his proficiency in literature, politics and mass culture. It is impossible to read a page of his without feeling in the presence of a man who possesses varied information and disposes of it with a liberality untainted by ostentation.

Which brings me to the second virtue: his style, or, perhaps more properly, his tone. For Macdonald does not have what is usually thought of as style: his is not a particularly cadenced prose, nor is it folksy, jeweled, hieratic or whatever else is commonly labeled "style." Rather, it is sensibly, easefully, firmly, and sometimes devastatingly, straightforward. This does not mean that it is (though it can be) chatty; it is natural. Of the moral ambivalence in the film *Morgan!*, he writes: "But we

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give in too easily to the 'buts,' there are always 'buts' around, at some point one must draw a line and say but me no buts, this is this and that is that." The beauty of the sentence is in all those casual commas, all that informal parataxis that miraculously doesn't turn choppy, the hardheaded speed of a movement that hypotaxis would merely have slowed down and blunted. There is a leanness and sprightliness in this writing at least as hard to achieve as the most formal elegance.

Above all, there is a tone. The tone of a civilized man talking to his peers, who sometimes are a bit obdurate in their misapprehensions but usually are right up there with him, capable of understanding if only they are addressed with clarity, civility, and common sense. There is no haranguing, and certainly no hectoring; when Macdonald says of James Agee, "that he accomplished as much as he did despite his heroic efforts to fail by all twentieth-century-American standards of success is evidence of his genius," some very big statements are made in the most concise and convivial manner. Of Hugh Griffith as Squire Western in *Tom Jones* Macdonald says: "It is hard to think of a role for which Mr. Griffith would not be Too Much, with his piercing glare, his insanely dominant nose, his beetling brows and cavernous mouth, his overripe Welsh diction. Perhaps God." The point is made with worldly self-assurance, wit but not bitchiness, a decent amount of poetic-painterliness (note the picturesque interplay of "beetling" and "cavernous") but stopping short of "fine writing," a sternness tempered by good humor.

Good Clean Fun

That leads us to Macdonald's third major virtue, his sense of humor. It is impossible to read something so precarious as film criticism—which is obliged to have truck with movies that nobody in his right mind would want to see—unless it is informed by wit. This is where Macdonald triumphs. Though his wit can be as sharp as anyone's (in *Eclipse* "we have Alain Delon making a decorative hole in the movie"; "Joseph Losey [is] a versatile director who commands a wide range of styles for wrecking a movie"), he excels at humor, jollity, making his point with good clean fun. If the difference between wit and humor is that between a blade that cuts to the quick and a boot to the rear that sends the recipient flying, Macdonald, adept in both, prefers the latter, as in the following: "The good bad movie is a lively authentic and, in its modest way, quite respectable product Hollywood used to make in the thirties and forties before it succumbed to the ravages of Culture, like a primitive tribe coming into contact with civilization and exchanging its simple folkways for Mother Hubbards, pidgin English and syphilis."

The publication of *Dwight Macdonald on Movies* (Prentice-Hall, $9.95), a collection of film criticism spanning four decades, is almost a compensation for the fact that Macdonald gave up his monthly *Esquire* film column in 1966, explaining "one finds that as the years go by one has already reviewed, under another title, almost every new film one sees." Several objections can be raised against this compilation. The inclusion of a lengthy history of the Russian film in the '30s, though skillful and cogent, is no longer justified by consuming interest, particularly since the survey falls midway between useful information and detailed scholarship. Some early material, as well as some later ephemera, fugitive to the point of flightiness, could have done without being reprinted. Occasionally but quite significantly Macdonald has changed his mind on a film or director; he is always content to indicate this in a footnote, although a goodly postscript or even a new essay would have been more to the purpose. And removing the pieces from chronological order and rearranging them according to topics (usually films from the same country or by the same film-maker) brings certain repetitions or inconsistencies, which might have passed unnoticed, to the fore.

Indeed there are some words and tropes that Macdonald overworks. "Soggy," "raffish," and "jaunty" pop up a little too often; a scene from *Juliet of the Spirits*, the entire *8½*, Antonioni *in toto*, all manage to remind him of Veronese. "When a modern critic hears the word 'beauty,' he releases the safety catch on his fountain pen," Macdonald cracks alluding to the infamous Nazi remark; and again: "When a good bureaucrat hears [the words 'creative cinema'] he reaches for his fountain pen." Too much of a good thing. Purists will deplore Macdonald's occasional linguistic and grammatical lapses: "whom she has reason to believe has shacked up," the definition of "centripetal" as "flying out from the center," "irreality," "imbecilic," "thusly" and a few others; they might also regret his misspellings of foreign names (Afinogeniev for Afinogenov, Reifenstahl for Riefenstahl, Michael McLaimmor for Micheál MacLiammóir) and his cavalier indifference to French accent marks. In these matters the poor copy-editing and proofreading of his publisher, Prentice-Hall, are an added burden.

But these are minor nuisances—no worse than the toll stations on a scenic highway. And what vistas Macdonald opens before us! His book is not only distinguished film criticism, it is also social criticism and sociology of a high order, and is superb as a nosography of the American mass mentality. Moreover, large parts of it can be read purely as humorous writing of an unusually sustained quality: the section on Biblical spectaculars, for instance (*Ben Hur*: "Watching it was like waiting at a railroad crossing while an interminable freight train lumbers past, often stopping completely for a while"; *King of Kings*: "The responsibility for the crucifixion is again displaced from the Jews to the Romans, who are again made the fall goys"), deserves a place in any

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Anthology of American Humor. Yet the most valuable contribution may be to aesthetics, and not just film aesthetics but the universal aesthetics of art.

There are insights of the foremost importance into, among other things, the way in which realism carried to extremes becomes itself a form of stylization; the fallacy of making films out of "lots of Big Moments, but no small ones"; the error of having movie characters' analyzing their situations rather than exemplifying them; the dangers of overstressing "personal expression" in art at the expense of "impersonal fabrication"; and so on. Here is part of one such insight, which applies equally to fiction, drama and film. "It has often been observed that women don't enjoy pornography because their eroticism is more emotional and less sensual than men's, but I haven't seen it noted that precisely because of this difference the woman's novel performs for female readers the same humble task of erotic titillation that pornography does for men. If the pornographic hero is a sexual athlete, the heroine of the woman's novel is an athlete of the emotions whose feats of feeling are described in lubricious detail, while the males are reduced to objects of sentimental lust no more individualized as human beings than are the stripped beauties, of whom one learns nothing beyond their anatomy, who satisfy the physical lusts of the males in pornographic fiction. Because for some reason sentimental orgies are not considered immoral in our culture, the woman's novel has always circulated freely, without interference from the police, though it could be argued that its debauchery of sentiment is more damaging to morality than are the pornographer's boldest fantasies." And Macdonald proceeds to argue it, brilliantly, concerning *The Pumpkin Eater*.

There are other good things about *Dwight Macdonald on Movies*. The comments on actors, though sometimes (as on Brando and Loren) too harsh, are often telling: Jean-Pierre Cassel's "insectlike precision," Paul Newman's "one expression an agonized grimace as of wood trying to smile," Audrey Hepburn as "not an actress" but "a model, with her stiff meager body and her blank face full of Good Bone Structure." (That "full of" is priceless.) He is equally good at dealing with other film critics, often remarkably generously, and his reviews of books and articles by Richard Schickel, Andrew Sarris, Donald Richie, John Russell Taylor and, especially, Pauline Kael constitute a brief practical course in film criticism. Sometimes—though surprisingly rarely—I find myself disagreeing with Macdonald's judgments; surely he overrates films like *8½*, *Last Year at Marienbad*, *The Gunfighter*, *Trouble in Paradise*, *Birth of a Nation*, while underrating *I Vitelloni*, *Eclipse*, *Sundays and Cybèle*, and some of Bergman's pictures. But this is unimportant and, at any rate, not subject to objective proof. What is of paramount importance, however, is his austere championing of art in the teeth of various forms of encroachment: commercialism, kitsch, camp, film buffery, and faddism.

And something else. Consider this passage from his "Forenotes" in which he evaluates his career as a film critic: "I can't even claim credit for Bosley Crowther's retirement as the *Times* movie critic. He was pretty old —sixty-two, my age." The second sentence, with its sudden switch from wit to seriousness, its terse unpathetic pathos, its dying fall, is sheer art. That is what the best criticism must be; what Macdonald's criticism so frequently is.

A spectrum of dualisms

MERTON AGAINST HIMSELF

ALICE MAYHEW

Himmler, October 4, 1943, in a speech to S.S. Generals: "Most of you must know what it means when 100 corpses are lying side by side, or 500, or 1,000. To have stuck it out and at the same time—apart from exceptions due to human weakness—to have remained decent fellows, that is what has made us hard. This is a page of glory in our history which has never been written and is never to be written."

"Pardon, Herr General," wrote Thomas Merton, "I cannot refrain from writing it."

Merton had complained bitterly about his writing from the beginning of his monastic life in the Kentucky hills at Gethsemani in 1941, but he wrote prolifically for the next 27 years of his life, until he died in Thailand in December, 1968, 27 years to the day that he had knocked on Gethsemani's doors. He was ordered to by his abbots, but also, it seems reasonably clear, he could not refrain, partly because he was an artist but also because he was increasingly concerned with being in meaningful contact with the "world" which, in his youth, he had been rather finicky about.

Nevertheless, from the beginning Merton wrote and wrote, though *Seven Storey Mountain* and *The Sign of*

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Jonas are filled with complaints and self-recriminations about both his orders to and his desire to write. Not only did he write more than three dozen books of poems, meditations, history and spiritual investigation, but he carried on a voluminous correspondence with people all over the world. His publishing career is not over at his death: an early novel, *My Agreement With the Gestapo*, written before he entered the Trappists, was published by Doubleday in the summer of 1969; and a mosaic of poems and dreams has just been published by New Directions, called *The Geography of Lograire*.

And I have no doubt that his career is far from over now, or that what is to come will show us more about where this extraordinary man, this extraordinarily gifted writer, was going, or thinking of going. He had in later life become interested in Buddhism and had written a book called *Mystics and Zen Masters* and other items on Eastern mysticism. He had, also, he told us in his autobiographical best-seller *Seven Storey Mountain*, ransacked the shelves of Columbia University library in 1937 and 1938 for books on the spirituality of the East. In a number of ways he seems to come full circle, and in others one can see a straightforward and exciting line. He was of a number of minds about a lot of things. I thought him annoying when I had the impression that he was elitist and condescending toward the world outside the monastery's walls. Well, he made no bones, he was frequently at odds with the world inside the monastery, too.

His attitude with regard his writing points to the nature of Merton's temptations toward a spectrum of dualisms. He tells us in *Seven Storey Mountain* of his earliest misgivings about a writing career. When he first got ideas about writing (Merton was, after all, already a writer on entering the monastery; aside from the just published novel, he had destroyed three-and-a-half works of fiction, but preserved his poetry), he spoke about them to his abbot, who was not slow in taking the hint.

It was a time of great activity, since somewhat lessened, for Gethsemani. The monastery was attracting many candidates, establishing numerous daughter houses, getting a lot of attention from the lay world, and being asked a lot of advice. So the pamphlet racks at Gethsemani guest house began to fill up with booklets called, "A Trappist says . . . ," "A Trappist declares . . . ," "A Trappist implores . . . ," "A Trappist asserts . . . ."—occasionally, Merton remarks ironically, even something about the contemplative life. As for himself, his first book, *Thirty Poems*, was published at the end of 1944. Then Merton, the publishable monk poet and writer, becomes Merton the exploitable asset, and is ordered to write; now Merton the writer (because writing is *not* contemplation, and writing *is* what the old Merton, the worldly Merton, had wanted to do) becomes Merton the enemy.

"So it is not hard to see," he writes in *Mountain*, "that this is a situation in which my double, my shadow, my enemy, Thomas Merton, the old man of the sea, has things in his favor. If he suggests books about the Order, his suggestions are heard. If he thinks up poems to be printed and published, his thoughts are listened to. There seems to be no reason why he should not write for magazines. . . ."

In his own heart, he did not think it was God's will. But Father Abbot had said, "I want you to go on writing poems," and further exhorted him to write something "to make people love the spiritual life." So he continued writing; the record is public, except for thousands of letters in recipients' possession the world over. With the publication of *Seven Storey Mountain*, he became an international celebrity, the most popularly read spiritual writer of his time. After the book was clearly on its way, he complains: "I caught myself thinking, 'If they make it into a movie, will Gary Cooper be the hero?' "

It is certain from the early journal, *The Sign of Jonas*, that both the command and his drive to write continued to disturb his peace. He was, at the same time, struggling to find what his vocation as a contemplative implied, thinking about leaving the community to join the more eremitical Carthusians, and struggling to find or figure out how he could get the solitude he knew was the prerequisite for the communion he sought with God.

He was giving conferences, writing poems, preparing official Gethsemani publications, compiling a history of the order, translating, directing novices, scratching out letters, keeping the journal that tells us about all this conflict, and writing on the meditative life, *Seeds of Contemplation*. "The sun comes out," he wrote, "and so does the typewriter." It made for a busy and distracted day for someone whose thoughts revolved around a desire for solitude (he read voraciously too, it's clear from his writing) and who at the same time was trying to hold off or push out the world with both hands.

"Delightful darkness, delightful sun, shining on a world which, for all I care, has already ended." Take care not to be poisoned by the world, by your own writing. In 1947 there was the Platonic notion that the real, the only important action, was that which was advertently removed or snatched from the world (solitude, even in the monastery, was stolen time). In the journal that was to be published as *The Sign of Jonas* and which covers his early life in the monastery, Merton wrote that "even my contacts with the outside—with the world of writers and of people who publish and of people who insult one another for the sake of art—have their advantages. To see how seriously men take things and how little they profit by their seriousness."

This business over his writing was surely a great conflict and, I think, one aspect of a search for his identity

ALICE MAYHEW *is an editor with a major New York publishing house.*

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John Updike

SOUTH OF THE ALPS

Signorina Angeli, veteran of *Vogue*
and a New York marriage, had a heavy foot
between Milan and Como.
The speedometer swung
to 160 kilometers per hour,
pressed through trembling, and clung
like a locust husk that cannot let go.

Presto, troppo presto!
the sides of our lemon Citroën hissed
at aquavita trucks we narrowly missed.
Less fluidly, in middle distance, villages
in red hats slowly turned to gaze
like groups of streetcorner pensioners
who had seen worse ruins than our.
Green Alps, bearing aquaducts,
grew dreamily near.

Her chatting lover occupied the death seat. As
I cringed behind him, I felt my face
on the edge of explosion, my tender teeth
strewn in a stew of glass, my spine
a row of dominoes, my ghostless flesh
an interstice of metal; and I saw her eyes
suspended in the rearview mirror,
immaculately calm:
fringed jewels flattered
by the velvet hypnosis of her task.

She was an ikon nailed
to the blank wall of our blinding speed:
her nose stiletto-straight, her nostrils
nice as a skull's, her lips downdrawn
upon the candy of her pout—
reversed details that linked
in clever foldout to the real:
to the empress oval of her tight-pulled hair,
her ear's pearl curve, her hands
at rest, with tips of nacre, on the wheel.

Beauty, deep in hock to time,
is reckless with its assets; I,
a cowardly word-hoarder, hugged my wish
to smudge more proofs with dubious
corrections. She was clean copy,
her future a back issue.
Of course I adored her, though my fate
was a midge on her wrist she could twitch away;
the Old Testament said truly: fear
is love and love is rigid-making fear.

A traffic circle. The lake. We slowed.
Acknowledging my *grazie,* Signorina showed
on her smiling jaw a small mole *Vogue*
had airbrushed out.
Her mother—
who calls the Pope "Montini" and considers
him a Communist—had had the marriage annulled.
Hence, she is still "Signorina."

We ate, she, I, and her beau
above Lake Como
in green air so
soft we were not dizzy though
the lake was a little sky below,
the motorboats blunt comets.
The wine
was Piedmontese and suave; the breeze
like a nerved-up gambler fidgeted with chips
of sun on the virgin tablecloth.
Bella, troppo bella.
Her hand fell heavy on my arm and grasped.
"Tell me, why doesn't anything last?"

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as a contemplative and, as well, a striking figure for Merton's always pervasive thought ultimately modified the dualist notion that there were two distinct cities, one for God and one for *Them*. This dualism stood him one foot in ecstatic quite and the other in the noisier and problematic world of Us, those for whom he wrote.

Nonetheless, these early writings betray the writer's habitual self-consciousness. September, 1949: "If I were more immersed in the Rule of St. Benedict, I would be a better writer." He talks about his writing as if it were not just a predilection but, he seems later to realize, his particular *monastic* vocation. April, 1949: "But when I tell myself, 'I am no writer, I am finished,' instead of being upset I am filled with a sense of peace and of relief perhaps because I already taste, by anticipation, the joy of deliverance. On the other hand, if I am not delivered from writing by failure, perhaps I may go on and even succeed at this thing, but by the power of the Holy Ghost—which would be the greater deliverance."

Very annoying and contradictory, at first, but I would suggest that Merton's monastic life eventually bore fruit in a process that would try to close this gap for himself as well as for us others. Having stared at the gap between the world and God as if it were an uncrossable chasm ("one of us has got to die," he said of the two Mertons), he jumped and lived to share the fruits of his contemplation with other men, learned to know the Christ, in his own words, of "the burnt men."

There were still, even much later, these remarks, these attitudes, in Merton's writing that could stop one short. Michele Murray, in an insightful review of *Raids* and *Confessions of a Guilty Bystander*, in *The National Catholic Reporter*, points to Merton's habit of sliding toward exhortation that tended to become abstract and was out of touch with the actual situation of those who must cope with "the world"; e.g. "the realm of politics is the realm of waste."

Merton complained about machines; Mrs. Murray suggested that they relieved some workers of back-breaking labor; Merton said the offending machine at Gethsemani which harvested all the corn did work that was hard but healthy and that, apparently, he himself enjoyed. An aesthetic answer to a political problem. Merton pointed out that this hard labor, and the wood-chopping that had wrecked his back and which he also missed, was "the kind of work the poorest farm hands do." It's hard to see anything but a symbolic connection; symbol for the monks. Also, she was, I think, correct in stating that some of Merton's political analyses were more in the way of a poet's metaphorical expression and tended not to be realistic or helpful to us.

Still, *Confessions of a Guilty Bystander*, which lends itself to comparison with *The Sign of Jonas*, since it is, though more loosely, based on Merton's journals, is quite a different proposition. It contains, to put it mildly, more humor; and as the title suggests most strongly, it is the work of someone who lives in this world of ours with us and is responsible to it even though he is in a monastery. (He had always suggested that he was responsible *for* the world; in the sense that the sinner is culpable for the evil in the world.) Nevertheless, Merton became, monk, solitary and all, a man of his times. A radical, a revolutionary, a religious anarchist, an inspiring pacifist, even an activist.

Martin Marty, who had written a critical review of *Seeds of Destruction* when it was published, wrote Merton an open letter three years after, in which he remained critical of Merton's apocalyptic tone, but admitted Merton's degree of accuracy in his predictions of what might happen when the civil rights struggle became a matter of black versus white power, and not any longer the easy-to-love non-violent movement of Martin Luther King. (Merton much admired King, of course, as a man of religion and as a fellow pacifist.) Dr. Marty, nevertheless, found Merton's scenario not helpful to the world-bound.

Merton had written in "Letter to a White Liberal": "I visualize you, my liberal friend, goose-stepping down Massachusetts Avenue in the uniform of an American Totalitarian Party in a mass rally where nothing but the most uproarious approval is manifest, except, by implication, on the part of silent and strangely scented clouds of smoke drifting over from the new 'camps' where the 'Negroes are living in retirement.' "

The point of Marty's letter to Merton was that the apocalyptic tone is shrilly pessimistic. Marty suggested that Merton's tone, and ours, could not accomplish anything in the real world if it was shrill and moralistic, condescending at one moment and apocalyptic at another; that the Christian needs a program for the world, not to recoil from the world. This was Merton's old dualism: ". . . the most creative thing to do is to sit on the curbstone and weep." It is a rejection of the world as inherently evil. Three years after that essay had been published in *Seeds of Destruction*, Merton answered Marty's letter, and he indicated clearly that he was realizing more and more the great problems of the world had better be tackled right there—a fact which makes Merton increasingly important to us. It was one thing to shudder at the world from within the monastery, or sit on the world's curbstone and weep. It was quite another, to hear Merton say in his letter to Dr. Marty, in September, 1967, that we must bear in mind that the world's "order" is disorder, and that we must explore the ways of Christian violence. How about a white non-violent response to Negro violence? The Christian anarchist may not have a neat program but he does commit himself to others, in the world, and holds himself to be, with them, on the spot. Merton was on the spot with us, most marvelously then.

Coincidentally, I have just read the first book of Merton's extant, the recently published novel, *My Argument with the Gestapo,* and the most recently published

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book of poems, *The Geography of Lograire*. They bear striking resemblances as well as striking contrasts. The novel, written just before he entered Gethsemani, while he was teaching at St. Bonaventure, is a fantasy, as are the late poems, and they both show an exuberance of language that seems somehow to have been suppressed in some of his middle writing.

In the novel, a young man who is Merton, returns to London during the first days of the Second World War, and is under suspicion because he will not admit to being a citizen of any place in the world and because he is writing something that is variously held, by the English and French police, and the German Gestapo, to be traitorous or obscene. This book, hilarious and sardonic, is full of macaronic passages that mock the poor, stupid, sinful citizens of the warring world and at the same time is filled with melancholy and self-accusation because the poet holds himself fully guilty for the bloody logical end of his own sinfulness and its equivalent, worldliness.

The young poet yearns to write and communicate and to understand: "I will have a hundred books, full of symbols, full of everything I ever knew or ever saw or ever thought." The citizen of nowhere on this earth, who talks about "the world's wide prison," who is "an exile all over the earth," writes, "double-talk under the aspect of a kind of vow of science," and puts down his Esperanto prayers, his "vow of silence non-commercial speeches," his "cheap pearls of double-talky witsdom." "I am so unpublished," he remarks, "I am a kind of Trappist, in my own way."

The novel is both awkward and sometimes brilliant, but it captures Merton in the springtime of his Platonic view: the City of God was private, non-communicable; the City of Man was separate and, as he was to say years later, he didn't care if he woke up one morning and found it gone.

The Geography of Lograire is also witty but in spite of the sardonic descriptions of the world, much more humorous. It is, in fact, the most humorous of his works. It is divided into sections, North, West, East, South. It is a poet's dream, but it is the dream of a poet who knows that this world is at once his and everybody's, though it cannot be fully communicated. Geography is in trouble all over Lograire, but here the poet's prayers are not turned in on himself, or against the world, but are filled with compassion. "My prayers are all torn out of the mourning paper," whereas, "the mystics sit down to eat/Each from his private bowl."

The bitterness is against the world's institutions but not the world: "Pain and Abel lay down red designs," but Miami is amusing and to be treated tenderly rather than dismissed with despairing contempt. Con Edison and Queens are monsters, and revolution is called for, and all the Cains are white; it's funny and hard. But Merton warns us: "If you have heart failure while reading this, the poet is not responsible."

He had said when he was very young that he wanted to write, like Blake, for the angels. He wrote and wrote, and he wrote for us.

The last of the Great Converts

JESUS REMUGGERIDGED

WILFRID SHEED

"Whatever it is, I'm against it" sang Professor Wagstaff (Groucho), the President of Huxley College. And Malcolm Muggeridge would probably rasp "Hallelujah" to that.

The proof from awfulness *(de odore omnium ceterum)* which St. Thomas left out has probably accounted for more converts than the other five put together. In England, the great Romish surge—Knox, Chesterton, and assorted tugboats—was pushed from behind by disgust with the modern world. Reading Mr. Muggeridge's book *Jesus Rediscovered* (Doubleday, $5.95) is like stepping back into that era: the sneers at science, at fashion-hungry prelates, at whatever they called situation ethics in those days, and always and everywhere at Progress. Even the ghost of the Fabian Society gets a last kick in the knickers. The mod references to birth control pills, protest marches etc. only serve to reinforce the nostalgia. The Great Converts were always grappling with the latest headlines.

The big difference, of course, is that there was still a Rome to go to in those days. Now that that vision is beginning to shimmer, where is a change-hater to turn? Actually, Muggeridge probably wouldn't have gone there anyway. His roots trace through Fabianism to its ancestor, Bigness-hating Chapel Protestantism. And his loathing for institutions allows no exceptions: they exist purely to accrete power and cater to vanity. No other function.

WILFRID SHEED, *author of* Pennsylvania Gothic *and* The Blacking Factory, *has just begun a drama column for* Esquire.

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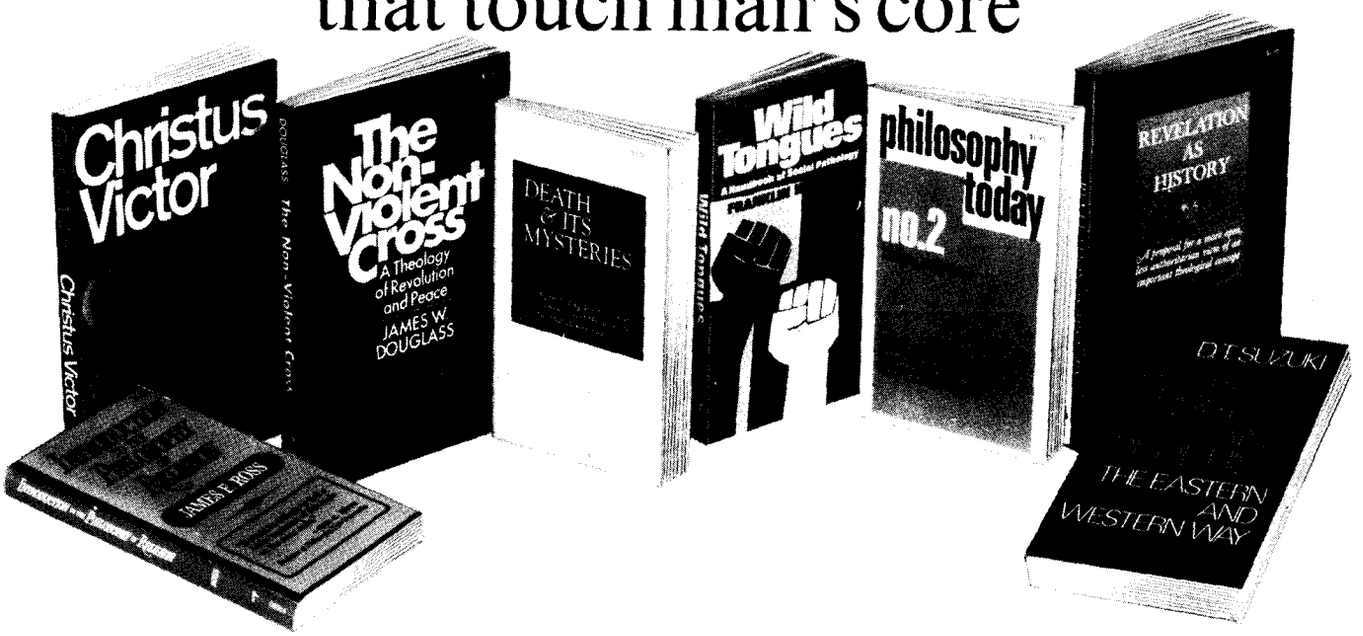

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What is left? The teachings of Christ, frozen in a book, so that they can no longer make an unexpected fool of themselves, the way a church can. But here Mr. Muggeridge begins to show a deplorable modern tendency himself: he selects the passages that suit him. One shudders to think what Monsignor Knox would have made of it: of a man who leaves out hell and ecclesiology, who thinks it completely unimportant whether any of it actually happened, and who finds much dogma "irrelevant and even repugnant." Muggeridge sounds almost like one of those disastrous clergymen who are giving everything away in order to keep up with the times.

There may be nothing intrinsically wrong with this position and no one is still asking him to clear it with Msgr. Knox. But when Muggeridge adds that ecumenism is now easy for the churches because "believing little, they correspondingly differ about little," he might show a little understanding for their difficulties. Doctrinally at least, they probably believe as much as he does.

What he is demanding is a moral absolutism, based on selected gospel readings combined with dogmatic indifference. Historically, this may prove hard to achieve. The religious rot he deplores began with doctrine, not morals. The Anglican appeasers gave away the authenticity of the Gospels first. After that, nobody gave a fig what they taught about sex. And if Mr. Muggeridge wishes to chastise the Roman Church for not holding the line, he might ask himself why he cannot accept Orthodox Roman teaching himself: the teaching they were holding the line with.

His habitual cynicism, a stock-in-trade that no one would want him to be without, is a real bar to understanding here. Christian clergymen have done silly things in the name of relevance, and he scores some nice points off them. But to suppose that all their wobbling is caused simply by a desire to please is unduly harsh. They are having the same difficulties believing as he is; but unlike him, they find it hard to be so certain on a point like the birth pill, which has no scriptural reference at all, while being so airy about the Eucharist.

Everyone likes a cynic to write a book, so that he can make the same mistakes the serious people have been making. Muggeridge's own testimony of faith is beyond cavil of course, although as puritanically individualist as his hero Bunyan's. And his emphasis on Christian unworldliness is at least the start of a good argument with the secular Christians.

But his notion of the world slumps too often into journalism. He feels he can raise a groan just by mentioning Harold Wilson or de Gaulle or protest songs (because protest is "so easy"; hymn-singing presumably is not). Obviously the world is going to the dogs if we still have Harold Wilson around. He says at one point that there are no world problems, only a problem of man. But this formula, as Catholics know, is even easier than protest. What does it say to crop failures or worn-out soil? Can mass hunger, of which he disapproves, really be tackled without recourse to institutions and power? He mentions Christian hospitals with admiration, and says aptly that he has never seen a Fabian hospital. But since he refuses to support the church that built the hospitals and jeers at the governments that build hospitals too, haven't we a right to ask how many Muggeridge hospitals he has seen lately? "He [my father] was most at home with moral issues—a self-indulgence I have inherited." And as Nichols and May used to say, a moral issue is more fun than a real issue.

As a good critic Mr. Muggeridge knows where his scepticism came from, if not ours. His father was a true believer in utopian socialism and Malcolm believed too, out of love. The shattering of this faith has been one of the cruelest stories in this century, and one cannot blame a man who refuses to bite again. One can imagine what Muggeridge would say to a lapsed Christian who wanted to come over and try *his* old faith.

But we've been having our troubles over here too, and Mr. Muggeridge should not be shocked by the sarcastic reception he has received. Christianity-after-Chesterton is trying to put itself together again, just as socialism-after-Shaw is, and keep going. He talks of a Christ outside history, as, say, Socrates is not, because he is understandably sick to death of history, But the church to most of us is Christ in history, stumbling, falling, as fair game for the satirist as Harold Wilson ever was; dying in disgrace—this crucial part he accepts—and rising again. If he ever sees Christ in Harold Wilson, he will be a Christian indeed.

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PHILIP LEGLER

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The wind is rough like
their faces; their faces are
brown like adobe.

In the sun-dried brick,
in the smoke rising out of
chimneys, centuries

of labor quiet
as eyes, as fingers winding
a fine yarn into

braided hair. Even
here in Kansas City, on
our way back to you,

even here, driving
toward St. Louis, our hands
keep the mud texture.

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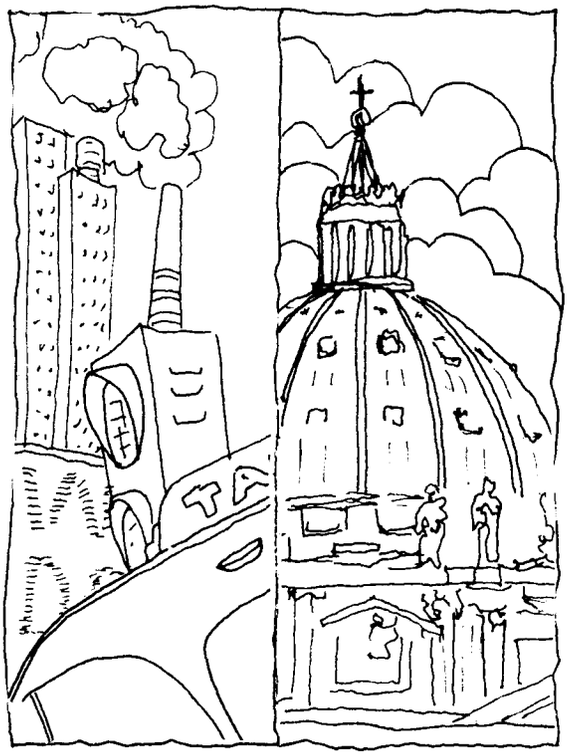

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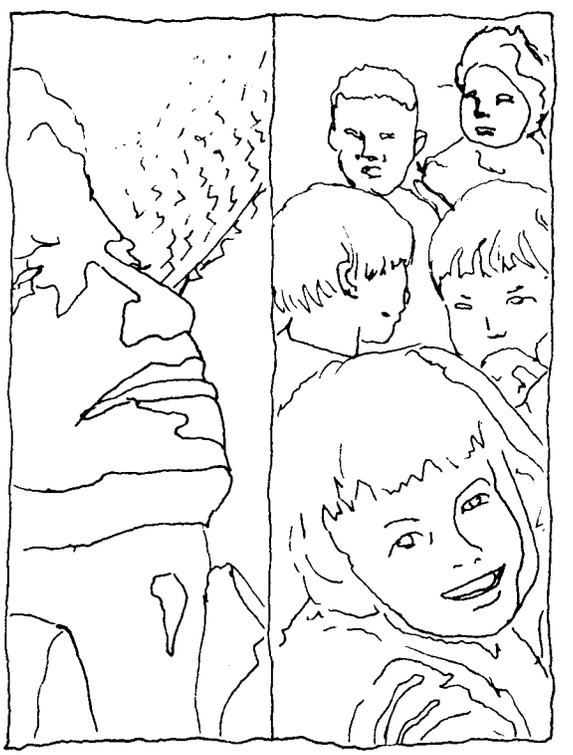

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NORA L. MAGID

Before I was born, in the Province of Quebec, my mother, who was literate, European, and not quite at home with the habits of the natives, paid a visit to the Bibliothèque de Montréal. The librarian promptly telephoned my father. It seems that my mother, a pregnant lady, had made the mistake of asking for a copy of *Nana*. The librarian said that this was as forbidden as it was disgusting, and he advised my father to undertake henceforth to look to his wife's morals a little more adequately. When I went to school, even at the university, we read Pepys and Shakespeare in bowdlerized baby form, we were told of the existence of certain works of Lawrence and of Joyce, but we were not allowed to read them, and a teacher at McGill when I was there was suspended for having made in a lecture on Byron a naughty and rather childish reference to the word incest. Movies we were not permitted to see till we were sixteen, and when we finally made it, we didn't understand them anyhow, because they had been so interestingly chopped up. If I remember correctly, a man was allowed to kiss no one but his lawful wedded wife, and this led to crazy excisions. So strong is the effect of conditioning, that to this day I don't really follow movies. In this world of cuts, there were also, curiously enough, concomitant additions. One of my earliest recollections is of watching sign-painters adjusting an enormous Jantzen billboard that must have originated in that sinful place, the States. They were painting in little tops for all the small boys in the picture in bathing trunks. Fair enough, since we little girls were not permitted to wear shorts, let alone go topless in public places.

What was the end result of all this enthusiastic guardianship? Innocence of so spectacular a nature, that when I arrived at graduate school (Columbia), positively radiating naïveté, the professor to whom I was assigned couldn't stand it. He sent me out to contemplate the collected works of Sigmund Freud. Nothing if not acquiescent, I sat down and read all the however many volumes. One after another, straight through. In one ear and out the other. When the seminar met the next week, the man asked if I had read all of Freud. I said yes. He asked what my impression had been. Not nice, I said, and that was very much that.

Time passes. A few months ago, having been a New Yorker for years, I saw my first "naked" show. I did not know when I went that the characters would take their clothes off, and the whole affair was rendered rather more arresting by the fact that I happened to recognize one of the boys in the cast. In some past life, I was a magazine editor, and this young man was continually presented as a literary hotshot. During my tenure at the periodical, he never did cough up with a manuscript, but in this play he sure as hell took his clothes off. Every last stitch. My reaction, after the first staggering surprise, was an almost total lack of reaction. The point of all this preamble is that we have become a nation of spectators, and even when we stem from backgrounds as constricted as mine, we are accustomed to staring passively. In a year when I have looked on all kinds of violence, I am apparently not likely to do a double take when I see onstage a human body revealed naked. I might point out that in the circles in which I ordinarily travel we still tend to keep our shirts on.

The question is, I suppose, this: Having lived under two neighboring and very different kinds of democracy, was I better off (for want of a better term) in the former than I am under the latter. In formal ways now perhaps the state minds my business a little less oppressively, but there are still limits on expression. The first amendment to the Constitution may theoretically protect my right to free speech, and by extension, my right to read and my right to see, but there are obvious lines of boundary. For one thing, as a deportable alien, I am not at liberty to advocate the overthrow of the United States government. In a less absurd instance, in the Columbia neighborhood in which I live, which is under unusual surveillance, I am aware that note is taken of actions and of words. I have watched non-press photographers recording faces at demonstrations, and at a community meeting on campus recently, I was not remotely amused to have a neighbor poke me to indicate that a man nearby was furtively transcribing every word we were saying in a private, casual, and entirely innocuous conversation about institutional demolition of housing.

When I came to this country, I had to vow not only to keep my hands off the government, but also not to contract any "filthy or loathsome disease." The word "filthy"—the vocabulary of the puritan ethic dies hard—stands written in yet another federal context, in the obscenity statute that is the basis for post office intervention in censorship cases. For those who would consider this area and its complexities, Harry M. Clor, who teaches political science at Kenyon, has produced an exceptionally useful book. Unfortunately, in its effort to be thorough and unbiased, it is also so tedious as to be virtually unreadable. For reference purposes, however, it is good. It details the history of thought on the topic in this country, gives an account of major court cases and rulings, and has excel-

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lent lists of public documents, trials, relevant books and collections, and articles in law and other professional journals. But in method the approach is classic dreary dissertation. The little cards are lined up like soldiers and, under the appropriate headings, are mustered one by one. A single indigestible footnote—that's the approved place for leftovers—invokes Montesquieu, Rousseau, Jefferson, and Washington, and their respective ideas.

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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In tone, there is an obvious attempt to be rational and just, but a suppressed and disquieting emotionalism seeps through. One cannot quote with approbation from, say, Frederic Wertham and the like, without picking up something of their faintly shrill flavor. And it is a fact that those who are against censorship tend to write with more flair, wit, and sophistication than do those who advocate it.

Mr. Clor himself has little or no humor, and his penchant for preaching is incorrigible. As an example of the former: "A sexual scene should not stimulate desire or loathing as such, it should stimulate an interest in the characters—in what they are doing and undergoing." *Ma foi.* As an example of the latter—and like so many of his statements this is also an awkward paraphrase of the quote from someone else that precedes it: "Excessive concern with the gratification of sensual desires, or extreme forms of such gratifications, weakens the higher faculties upon which self-control and social responsibility depend. . . . Thus a nation of thoroughgoing sensualists would not be able to respond to Churchill's call for sacrifice even if it wished to do so. The 'citizens' would have lost the capacity to sacrifice immediate satisfaction to long-term ends." The man sometimes sounds as if he were writing *Utopia.*

Part of the difficulty may be that one's own response to this is obviously not only intellectual and personal and perhaps religious, but also regional. When Mr. Clor says flatly that "modern civilized life insulates most of us to a considerable degree from certain basic facts of existence; from, for instance, violence, pain, and death," I am dumbfounded. I find myself wondering in what Shangri-la he lives. In New York, I proceed from dislocation to dislocation, surely not atypical. I have been mugged, have seen riots, have had a friend murdered, have witnessed countless crimes. Urban living is almost the ultimate obscenity. And if being at Kenyon protects Mr. Clor from certain extremes, now the rule rather than the exception, surely Ohio has not managed to outlaw pain and death.

The implications of the First Amendment are inordinately complicated. If one believes, as several Justices do, that it is absolute, then all prosecutions for obscenity are unconstitutional. If one accepts rather—and this is a matter of varying degree—that the state is the keeper of the public morality, then the door is opened to debate without end on what is covered by the notion of free speech, what for that matter comprises the press, what the role is of public and private agencies in regulation of opinion, expression, and spectacle. There are further predicaments because responses again may be regional and/or religious, and because the very word obscenity is difficult of definition. (In a remarkably stupid statement out of presently swinging Quebec, which goes to show what can be accomplished when the lid does come off, when McGill students moronically reprinted that appalling Johnson-Kennedy thing that had appeared in *The Realist,* some faculty members I am told, defended the publication. "Today's pornography," they are said to have claimed loftily, "is tomorrow's literature.")

"Redeeming Social Importance"

In major American court cases described by Mr. Clor, questions abound: of intent, of "redeeming social importance"—and American literary critics in their turn have also said some pretty silly things about fairly terrible books to prove that they were art. There is also the question of commercial exploitation and of pandering. Pornography is apparently big business, though how big no one seems to know. (Charles Rembar, in his livelier book, *The End of Obscenity,* mentions successful writers of the Times Square stuff whose fee is infinitesimal.)

All issues of ideology aside, and these are important, the big question of whether pornography is medically harmful has yet to be resolved. Oddly enough, it is seldom indicated that even in its classier forms it is hideously boring. Ralph Ginzburg has said plaintively that if he is liable to prosecution, then Philip Roth certainly should be. Prose-

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cutions do fall haphazardly (another problem) but *Portnoy's Complaint*, a delicious book, would never strike me as a candidate. On the other hand, John Updike's *Couples* seems to me no more than tiresome permutations and combinations to no purpose save the promotion of a non-existent titillation. Further, I cannot tell one character from another, and wonder if anyone else can. But I would not ban it; nor, I assume, would Mr. Clor, since elegance of style and reputation of publisher are further factors that both he and the law tend to distinguish.

Mr. Clor's own point of view seems to be that law must finally be protective, that parents and teachers in their discharge of responsibility toward children must be bulwarked by regulation. Law must curtail the availability of obscenity, and "restrict influences which harmfully affect the wellsprings of conduct—the values of sensibilities, the mind and the character of men." Law must be essentially conservative, and must "within the confines of contemporary community opinion"—in an unhomogenized society another area of monstrous difficulty—maintain its standard-setting function. ("Common conscience" Mr. Clor identifies as that which "is interpreted by recognized national leaders and by leaders of various communities within the nation." Heaven help us.)

In rendering the arguments of others, Mr. Clor is scrupulous. Perhaps overscrupulous, since the reader sinks under the weight of detail without leavening. Points of view represented include those of both extremes—those who would censor absolutely on all the obvious grounds, and those who, even in instances of clear and present danger, would have no censorship at all, i.e., those who believe that thought control of any kind is menacing and sets dangerous precedents. In this connection, it is instructive to note that Denmark, since legal sanctions against dirty books (for adults) were lifted, has experienced a 25% decrease in sexual crime. Again, causal relationship might be hard to establish, but the fact is worth considering.

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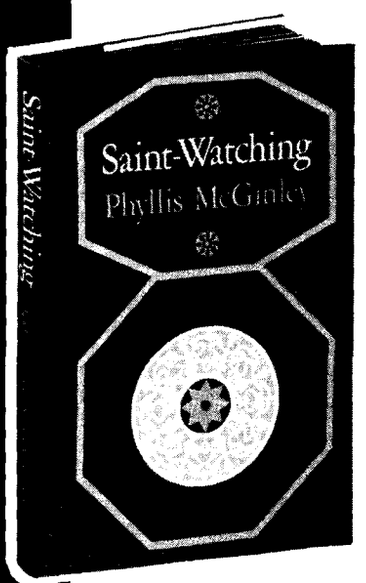

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The Religious Situation: 1969

DONALD R. CUTLER, ED.

Beacon, $15.00

SALLIE TeSELLE

When one has 900 words to discuss a book of over 1000 pages containing 45 articles (and weighing 4 pounds), one had best get to the point. But that's not easy. The editors claim that *The Religious Situation: 1969* is for the general reader as well as the theologian; that it is the second in an annual series chronicling world-wide religious moods and developments; that the 1969 volume focuses on authority, law and order, and religious liberty (with long side glances at experimental medicine and the new popular piety as well as shorter glances elsewhere); that each article is meant to fulfill a briefing function, a curricular function, and a provocative function. So, what is the point? Readers will disagree. I found myself grouping articles into various categories (not necessarily the ones the editors advertised): most stimulating, most informative, most hip, most "mostest."

The discussion billed as "Preserving Life, Defining Death: Religious Implications" (which included essays by Joseph Fletcher, Paul Ramsey, M. H. Pappwroth, Daniel Callahan, and Frederick Elder)* was especially stimulating because it provided a divergence of perspectives on touchy questions in the area of experimental medicine, including a lengthy piece by Callahan on "The Sanctity of Life" (followed by three respondents). Though the volume as a whole has a smorgasbord flavor, this book-length discussion of organ transplants, the definition of death, genetic planning, and the sanctity of life is a balanced full-course steak dinner. The various articles reveal the complexity, confusion, and various legitimate concerns in this area rather than giving "the religious answer." Apparently each succeeding volume will have one such set of essays discussing a topic in depth and I would appreciate two or three such sets in each volume.

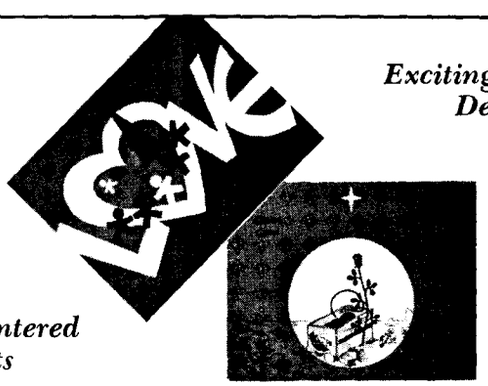
In addition to the "most stimulating" category, I would add a "most informative" one. This category is really a reader's grab bag because it includes those topics a reader knows least about. I found myself fascinated by Pentecostalism in Chile (Christian Lalive d'Epinay), the history of the ministry and the draft in this country (George Huntston Williams), a seventy-five page essay on changing patterns of Protestant philanthropy (William G. McLoughlin). These essays (and several others) reminded me of the articles in, say, the now-defunct *Reporter* magazine; they give background to the foreground in such a way that the foreground becomes a different sort of ground—more interesting, more complex, more problematical. It seems to me that this sort of essay is peculiarly successful in a volume of the type attempted here, for unlike some of the survey articles which attempt too much in 15 pages (and come off reading like the religion section in *Time*), the essays devoted to a single specific topic, ranging widely back into its history and out into its contemporary thrust, have a distinctive integrity and offer much to the reader.

Under the "most hip" category fall many of the articles, for the volume is meant to catch 1969 on the run: psychedelics and religious experience, the underground church, T-Groups, theology for cosmonauts, Corita's "co-expressionism," etc. These pieces are not meant as a sop to the theologically weary, however, for many of them are first-rate. The material is more generally familiar and hence most readers will probably find their responses to these essays more critical.

Finally, there is the category of the most "mostest" and here I would single out a few superb articles which, though in some instances reprints, add immensely to the volume: Vincent Harding's "The Uses of the Afro-American Past" (the agony, patience, anger and astuteness of an acute historical mind pleading with all Americans to read aright the lessons of Afro-American history), Robert Jay Lifton's now famous essay "Protean Man," Herbert Richardson's "The Symbol of Virginity" (a profound treatment of the importance of the status of women for the well-being of an entire culture), and Robert Bellah's "Transcendence in Contemporary Piety."

I suppose one must finally ask: Does *The Religious Situation* offer *enough*

*published as a separate paperback titled *Updating Life and Death* by Beacon Press, $2.95.



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for that $15 tab or the time spent? I don't think it especially appropriate to dwell on criticism of the volume "as a whole," to say, as I believe is the case, that it is weak on theology, has an Eastern-WASP-Establishment slant (Southern and Mid-Western church people don't find these things going on in *their* churches); that it perhaps tries for too broad a readership and therefore seems right for no group, either theologians, laymen or the merely interested. Let Beacon Press make money out of it (I hope they will), let some weak essays be included with the strong, let the famous names be racked up in the table of contents; in any case, I found a number of essays that stimulated me, a number that informed me, a number that helped me cope with the contemporary flux, and a few that will stay with me for a long while. That's worth the $15, the 1000 pages, and the 4 pounds.

Doubtless few readers (apart from reviewers) will read the entire volume, but that shouldn't worry anyone. Like the Sunday *New York Times,* it's nice to know it's all there.

Conversations with Jorge Luis Borges

RICHARD BURGIN

Holt, Rinehart and Winston, $3.95

The Narrow Act: Borges' Art of Allusion

RONALD J. CHRIST

New York University Press, $6.95

JOHN HEIDENRY

"He [Lorca] said to me that he was very much troubled about a very important character in the contemporary world. A character in whom you could see all the tragedy of American life. And then he went on in this way until I asked him who was this character and it turned out the character was Mickey Mouse. I suppose he was trying to be clever. And I thought, that's the kind of thing you might say when you are very very young and you want to astonish somebody. But after all, he was a grown man, he had no need, he could have talked in a different way. But when he started in about Mickey Mouse being a symbol of America, there was a friend of mine there and he looked at me and I looked at him and we both walked away because we were both too old for that kind of game, no? Even at the time."

(Conversations With Jorge Luis Borges, page 94.)

Jorge Luis Borges is not the first, of course, to have gone into the labyrinths of artifice; but among moderns he has gone the farthest: turning always the wrong way, into indirections of literary concept and infigurations of fictional design. He has charted terrain not of mere paradox but of bifurcating option into space and time; not of mirror but of the so: not of narrative, word-play, description, metaphor but of word itself.

Words are Borges' labyrinth, his *ficciones:* so that in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" a group of scholars seditious against reality itself insert into the encyclopedias of knowledge a folio of imaginary history that gradually insinuates itself upon men's memory and succeeds the past. Pierre Menard, symbolist of Nîmes, proposes to produce a few pages of the *Quixote* which shall coincide —word for word and line for line—with those of Miguel de Cervantes; and indeed heroically composes texts of the 9th and 38th chapters of the First Part and a fragment of chapter 22 which are verbally identical, but spiritually inferior, to the original. In "The Library of Babel" men live within the spacious spacelessness of an infinite spiral offering on its shelves an infinite, uncataloguable number of books that contain all words of all languages and all possible languages in all possible ordering and composition of words: and beyond that, of all letters arranged in all possible systems. Hell or eternity is the everlasting free-fall of suicides who have leapt the banner into the circular oblivion within.

For the *real* Borges (to use a metaphor), words also are the radical funda-

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ment. Of his childhood, he recalls in *Conversations*, "I think of books and the illustrations in books. I suppose I can remember every illustration in *Huckleberry Finn* and *Life on the Mississippi* and *Roughing It* and so on. And the illustrations in *Arabian Nights*. And Dickens—Cruikshank and Fisk illustrations. Of course, well, I also have memories of being in the country, of riding horseback in Estancia and Uruguay in the Argentine. I remember my parents and the house with the large patio and so on. But what I chiefly seem to remember are small and minute things. Because those were the ones that I could really see. The illustrations in the encyclopedia and the dictionary, I remember them quite well. *Chambers Encyclopedia* or the American edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* with the engravings of animals and pyramids."

Borges, one of his translators has written, *"has read all the books."* He has published poetry, criticism, political propaganda, and his brief, monstrously erudite fictions. He has edited three important literary reviews. He has translated Gide, Kafka, Faulkner, Virginia Woolf. Now blind, and returned to political favor upon the overthrow of Perón, he directs the National Library.

Conversations With Jorge Luis Borges is an autobiography of a kind: a revery on life, literature, metaphysics—of childhood trips across the Plata to Uruguay and a family farm; of Chesterton, Poe, Browning, Unamuno, Rimbaud; of Nazism and Hiroshima; of the problems of infinity and the dissolution of reality. . . . Within his gracious genius he joins serious purpose with modesty and humor; affection for literature and writers with a bias towards large questions of religion, art, politics.

The Narrow Act by Ronald J. Christ inventories allusions in Borges' writings to numerous English-language authors for whom Borges has shown consistent preference: De Quincey, Shaw, Berkeley, Browne, Eliot, Coleridge, Chesterton, Emerson. It is meant not as documentation, however, but as an inquiry into method and goals; and if Borges says in a foreword that "the writer must be thankful for being shown that he has gone beyond what he attempted, beyond his intentions," perhaps that is simply in the nature of things: for the Borgesian to go farther into the labyrinth than Borges himself: to get lost in the blind alleys of the blind Argentine.

Note: in the May 9 issue of this journal I published a parody of Vladimir Nabokov, the general conclusion of which was that in the English language Mr. Nabokov has no peer. Naturally I have no reason or desire to change that opinion now. What particularly irritates me, however, is a remark made by our Geneva genius on the occasion of his

The Seven Minutes

IRVING WALLACE

Simon & Schuster, $7.50

Within a few weeks readers will be familiar with the plot of Irving Wallace's most recent "blockbuster," *The Seven Minutes*. The story is simple. Politically ambitious District Attorney Elmo Duncan, backed by Los Angeles' wealthiest industrialist Luther Yerkes and the book-burning Strength Through Decency League prosecute, as obscene, a book titled *The Seven Minutes* written in the '30s by the pseudonyminous J J Jadway, which has supposedly stimulated young Jerry Griffith to rape Sheri Moore, a sensational connection doubted by disillusioned young attorney Mike Barrett who believes the book of literary merit and written for the highest of motives—if only Barrett could find Jadway but, alas, Los Angeles' Cardinal MacManus reveals that Jadway committed suicide after his book appeared—or did he? After losing his star witnesses; being beaten by telephone buggers; rescuing Jerry Griffith from an attempted suicide; falling in love with Jerry's cousin Maggie; tracking down clues supplied by Columbia professor Hiram Eberhart, drunken poet Sean O'Flanagan and senile Cassie McGraw, Jadway's old mistress and heroine of *The Seven Minutes*, intrepid Mike Barrett discovers that Jadway is alive, living under his real (but as-yet-unknown) name, and about to be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. But Jadway, through his mouthpiece, the distinguished New England Senator Thomas Bainbridge, refuses to risk his career in the witness stand, that is, until Maggie Griffith, having guessed his identity, appeals to him: he is none other than *Senator Bainbridge himself*, who as a young man was cured of sexual impotence by Cassie McGraw and wrote *The Seven Minutes* so that other impotent youth might have the same advantages he had; and indeed it turns out that Jerry Griffith is impotent too and didn't rape Sheri Moore after all but instead she had intercourse with Jerry's friend George Perkins and, when Jerry couldn't second the act, taunted him, slipped on a throw rug and hit her head, going into a fatal coma after she tells her roommate Darlene Nelson to say it was rape. But why had Bainbridge staged the suicide of his pseudonym Jadway? Because Bainbridge's dominating father—gravely ill—had returned to the Church and Bainbridge discovered that Rome, in the person of Father Sarfati, was about to list *The Seven Minutes* on the *Index*, which would no doubt be a fatal blow to the elder Bainbridge were he ever to learn of Jadway's true identity.

Perhaps we overplayed our hand in making the *Index* episode so central to the plot. Certainly the portrait of Cardinal MacManus of Los Angeles was a little too much: "cottony white hair, baggy eyes, wrinkled skin, hunched back. . . . Cardinal MacManus' hairy nostrils sniffed." Finally, a few readers have recognized the subtle clue contained in the reference the "the common weal"

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being interviewed by the editors of *Time* for their cover story of May 23. It is always fun, of course, to read Mr. Nabokov's daffy dicta on Sigmund Freud, Joseph Conrad, Fydor Dostoevski, D. H. Lawrence—but his latest lunacy was in appalling bad taste: that he and his wife, on first reading Borges, had thought they were on the portico of a fabulous house—only to discover that there was no house, only a portico. One needn't get clever and stupid about all this and speak of little houses and big houses and sidewalks and porches and labyrinths; nor does Borges need my defense, as indeed nor did Nabokov my praise. But Mr. Nabokov ought to be reminded by someone that now and then his opinionations do get rather cloyingly cute, regardless of whether or not he takes the trouble to write down his answers to interviewers; that after all his affectation of public snobbery is self-serving and a sign of spiritual mediocrity; that his own work is far from perfect; and that he is simply wrong about Borges. I offer, in fact, my editorial assistance should Mr. Nabokov decide to undertake an abridgement of his recent overweight *oeuvre* that is now on the bestseller lists.

But as *Time* worked against me above, so space finally defeats me now, and I conclude.

Notebook 1967-68
Robert Lowell

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $6.00

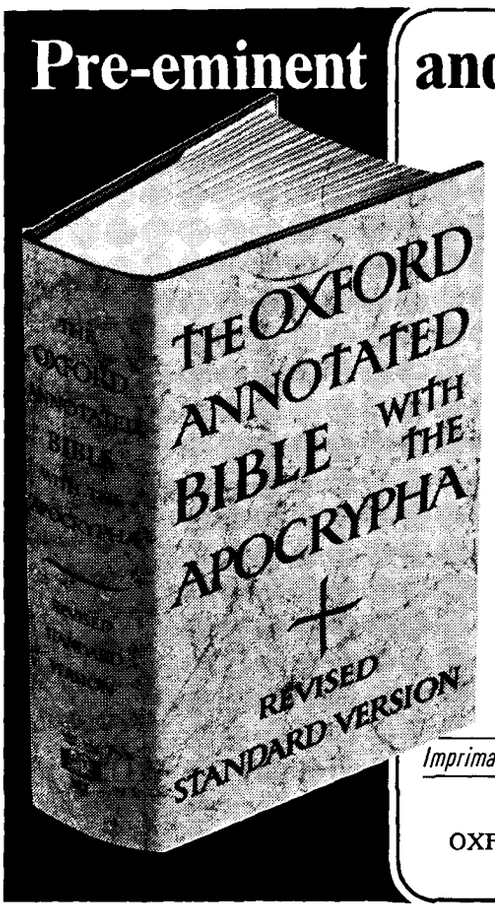
KARL MALKOFF

"I am learning to live in history," writes Robert Lowell, describing, possibly, his entire poetic career as well as his latest volume. But the nature of this "education" has necessarily been affected by a changing world. Lowell has become a public figure increasingly caught up in the violent, conceivably apocalyptic events of his time, preserving, however, his own particular approach to experience. Characteristically, he insists on a context of historical and mythic perspective within which to consider the present. His poems are as likely to be about Clytemnestra, Sir Thomas More, Roland, Richard III or Attila as Che Guevara, Robert Kennedy, Eugene McCarthy, deGaulle, or the Chicago police. Even more characteristic of Lowell—and this is the quality that gives *Notebook* its chief distinction—is the almost defiant personalness with which the poet views everything around him. He never becomes spokesman for an abstract point of view; if the reader sometimes feels cheated when Lowell does not more plainly denounce or commend, he is in the end convinced that he has been reading poetry rather than propaganda.

The poems in *Notebook* were written over a period of about a year, from the summer of 1967 to the summer of 1968. Lowell has appended a chronology of significant events, chiefly a list of wars, murders, and protests, not all of which are specifically alluded to in the poems. But the sequences are gener-

on page 545. At any rate, honesty in the Church compels us to admit our authorship of *The Seven Minutes*. The portrait of Irving Wallace on the book jacket is merely a composite photograph of the editors of *Commonweal*.

Unlike the *Newsday* authors of *Naked Came the Stranger*, however, we were not trying to see how bad a novel could be foisted on the American public. We had already satisfied ourselves on that score when we wrote Mr. Wallace's previous books, *The Man* and *The Chapman Report*. The reader who notes that every other page of *The Seven Minutes* consists of citations from James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Justice Learned Hand, Steven Marcus, Maurice Girodias, George Bernard Shaw. Judge Curtis Bok and other dignitaries will understand our actual motivation—to clean out an overflowing file of clippings on pornography and the law. Thanks to a new filing cabinet, we should not have to write another Irving Wallace novel for several years. THE EDITORS



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ally dated, approximately if not precisely, so that the reader can locate the poet's private world in its temporal relation to the world at large. There is, for example, no poem explicitly to commemorate the assassination of Martin Luther King, but there is a sequence dated "April 8, 1968" (four days after King's death), one of whose sonnets concludes:

> At this point of civilization, this point of the world, the only satisfactory companion we can imagine is death —this morning, skin lumping in my throat, I lie here, heavily breathing, the soul of New York.

The poem would make sense in terms of Lowell's own experience; but obviously the total context is important. The reasons for withholding crucial references probably go to the very heart of the volume. In a sense, it is simply that a poet's silences and distortions can have great impact. More to the point, however, Lowell wishes to dramatize the tension between the world of private experience and public affairs. Like Norman Mailer, to whose *Armies of the Night Notebook* may be the poetic equivalent, he confronts objective reality with subjective, asking for a redefinition of what actually constitutes an historic event. When Lowell's reactions to King's murder and funeral become indistinguishable from completely personal experience, Lowell is not simply saying that the inner world is equivalent to the outer; he is arguing the grounding of history in the concreteness of his own emotions as opposed to the abstractions of historians and journalists. Or, as Lowell says, less directly but more effectively,

> if we leaned forward, and should dip a finger into this river's momentary black flow, the infinite small stars would break like fish.
>
> ("Charles River")

Most of the poems, however, do not refer to the events in Lowell's chronology, not even obliquely. The *Notebook* is, after all, a record of the totality of the poet's experience; they are about friendship, love, marriage, children, his thoughts on poetry, fame, death. But everything takes place against the back-

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drop of the chronology. Maybe the most moving aspect of the book is the strain of the poet to live his life and somehow to preserve it from the chaos without, the chaos within. Futilely longing to touch history, Lowell simultaneously seeks to escape from its nightmare. The sheer details of day-to-day experience, carefully placed within a seasonal cycle, do in fact supply *Notebook* with an oddly affirmative tone; but the affirmation does not cancel the horror. The tension stands, leaving the volume poised between birth and death, between its historical framework (from Vietnam 1967 to Vietnam 1968) and its natural framework (from summer 1967 to summer 1968).

The tension between form and formlessness within the poet's mind is firmly rooted in poetic technique. The series of sonnets seems at times the unified whole for which Lowell aimed, held together by theme, but mainly by the force of the poet's personality; at other times it seems a series of fragments. The very label sonnet is here problematical. Fourteen lines of blank verse, is Lowell's description (although he concedes that in places lines break these limits and take on the roughness of prose); but the full and half rhymes often provide at least the ghost of a set pattern, toward which the reader feels drawn, but which he will never quite find. In other ways as well the words struggle against their framework; run-on lines, often with pauses just before the line's end; private allusions, barely on the threshold of public accessibility; surreal images; juxtaposed without transition, fragmenting the poems themselves and making the reader the locus of unity. Order ultimately triumphs, but not by denying chaos.

The journal-like nature of the book perhaps led Lowell to include poems he might otherwise have omitted; there are more weak points than one customarily finds in his work. But in spite of obvious difficulties in this kind of undertaking, this is not casual verse. It is rather Lowell at his best, expanding his powers in a performance whose excellence is overshadowed only by its virtuosity.

REVIEWERS

NORA MAGID *was formerly Literary Editor of* The Reporter.

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KARL MALKOFF *is a free-lance writer and critic.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 61)

nize differences between the crimes of the oppressed and those of oppressors, and that some messes have been considerably messier than others. McKenzie's remarks may be an antidote to current nonsense. Taken in too large a dose, they would only be another kind of poison.

D. MARGOLIS

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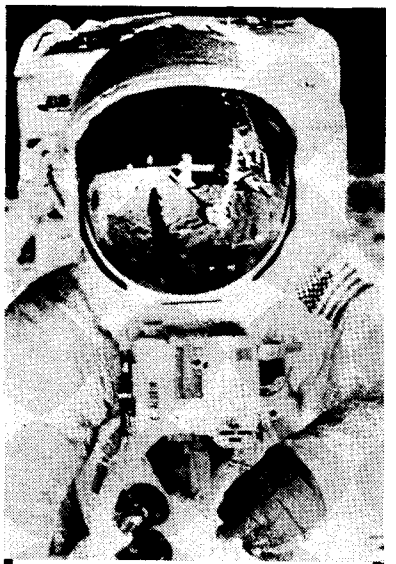

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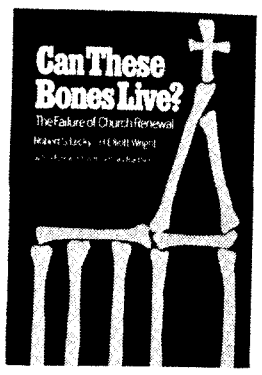

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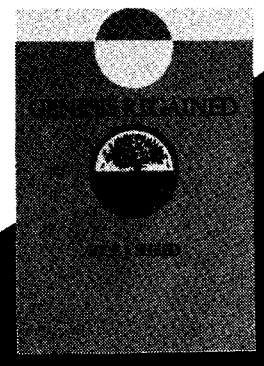

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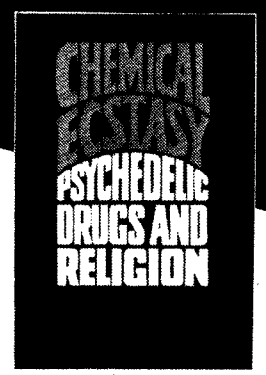

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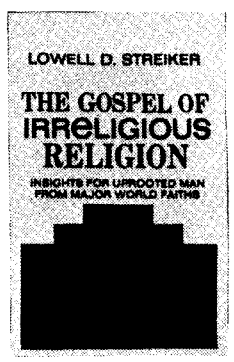

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